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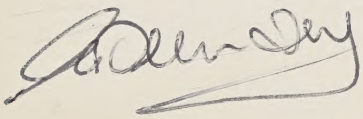

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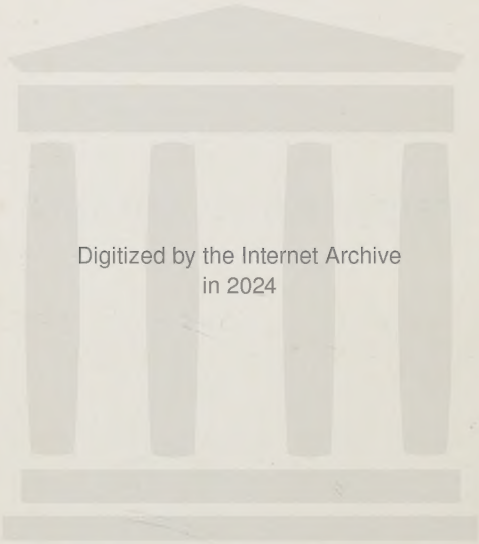

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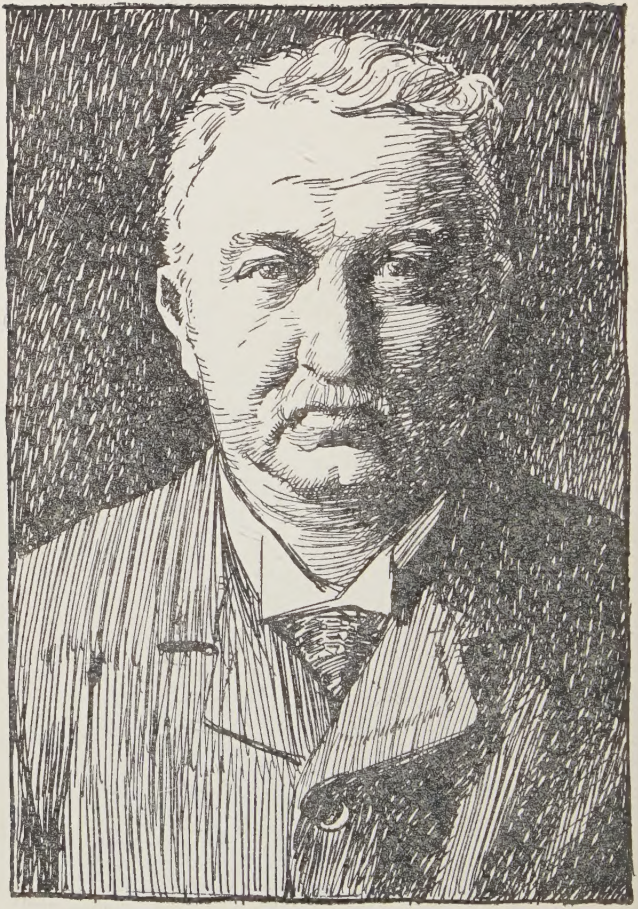

CECIL JOHN RHODES

1853-1902

By IAN D. COLVIN

AUTHOR OF "ROMANCE OF SOUTH AFRICA," ETC.

LONDON: T. C. & E. C. JACK
67 LONG ACRE, W.C., AND EDINBURGH
NEW YORK: DODGE PUBLISHING CO.

TO

HIS FRIEND

L. S. J.

FROM

I. D. C.

PREFACE

THE books to which I am most indebted for the material used in this little Life of Rhodes are Sir Lewis Michell's *Biography*, which is full of valuable information; Mr. Philip Jourdan's book of personal memories, which in its simplicity and sincerity has a fair title to be called a masterpiece; the *Speeches of Rhodes*, by "Vindex"—a "mine," as biographers say; and the late Sir Thomas Fuller's admirable monograph. Besides these there are others which I name elsewhere.

I. D. C.

ROYAL COLONIAL INSTITUTE,
December 1912.

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CECIL JOHN RHODES
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CHAPTER I

HOW RHODES WENT TO SOUTH AFRICA

Cecil John Rhodes, as he said himself, came of farming stock. His ancestors were substantial people, of St. Pancras Parish in the north of London, the founder of the family being a certain William Rhodes, a Staffordshire man, who bought lands in that neighbourhood about 1720. Rhodes's Farm has long since been swallowed up; but by the piety of their great descendant the names of no less than thirty-three of his race are now inscribed in durable granite in Old St. Pancras churchyard. They were yeomen, graziers, cowkeepers, brickmakers, churchwardens of the parish, and, growing in wealth with the growth of London, some of them hived off into the country. Thus Cecil's grandfather, William Rhodes, was a landowner of Leyton Grange in Essex, and his father, Francis William Rhodes, a country clergyman, first, from 1834 to 1849 at Brentwood in Essex, and then from 1849 to 1876 at Bishop's Stortford in Hertfordshire. If we may judge from the tradition of two countrysides, the vicar was a fine type of the Christian gentleman, simple, generous, careful of the poor. His portrait may be seen in

the vestry of Bishop's Stortford Church, a faded little photograph, showing a man tall of stature, with a face powerful and marked with thought, a lofty brow, long nose, and jowl a little heavy. His first wife died in childbirth, leaving him one daughter; the second, Louisa Peacock, a lady of good Lincolnshire family, was Cecil's mother. Cecil was the fourth son in a family of eleven, nine of whom survived infancy, and he was born at Bishop's Stortford on 5th July 1853, not in the vicarage, as Sir Lewis Michell supposes, but in a large square house called Thorley Bourne, on the London Road, half a mile or so from Bishop's Stortford railway station.

Bishop's Stortford is a little market town some thirty miles from London. It is the centre of a pleasant country district of leafy Hertfordshire; its streets run up and down and along the steeply rising sides of the little valley of the Stort. At the bottom, on either side the river, is a ruckle of old red-tiled malting houses, the malt finding its way by barge to London; above, a fine flint-work church (*circa* 1400), with a high stone tower and leaden spire, and generously adorned with gargoyles and other carvings, inside and out. The verger showed me with some pride a memorial window to the "good vicar, Mr. Rhodes," and the fine old carved stalls of the choir, some of which were used in Rhodes's time to seat "the seven angels of the seven churches," as the vicar called his sons. I was even shown Cecil's own seat, in a corner, with a swan finely carved on the under-side. Round the church cluster the vicarage, a pleasant house in a pleasant garden; the old grammar-school, superseded in Rhodes's time by the new; a picturesque old inn called "The Boar's Head"; and other houses built upon the generous lines

of the Georgian and earlier styles. Altogether it is a town in the character of the Home counties—to the eye of the visitor, a restful, even a sleepy place, with old houses backed or enfolded by old gardens, and old brick walls bearing old pear-trees, roses, and wistaria, looking down upon its little river and all round upon rich farmlands and substantial homesteads, with here and there a country house in its timbered park. Here Rhodes spent his boyhood, as we may be sure, very pleasantly, taking the normal share both in work and play. He was in the school first eleven at thirteen, and took a classical scholarship; tradition speaks of him as a golden-haired, delicate-looking little fellow, in nature somewhat shy and retiring, and with "an agreeable way of speaking which runs in the family." The vicar wanted his sons to enter the Church; but they had their own views, and most of them chose the Army.

Herbert, the eldest, a rover by nature, set out for Natal, then a struggling little colony, whose settlers lived under the menace of the Zulu power. Herbert experimented as a cotton planter, and when Cecil was seventeen, and refused both Church and Army, he was sent out to bear his brother company. Natal is a colony cut off from the rest of South Africa by high ranges of mountains, and, as it enjoys the warm currents and soft breezes of the Indian Ocean, it has a semi-tropical climate. The settlers were at that time experimenting with various crops, and agricultural experiment is proverbially a costly and laborious business; for settlers without capital it is apt to be disastrous. The brothers worked hard at their jungle land in the Umkomaas valley, and soon had one hundred acres under cotton. They committed the mistakes inevitable to beginners, and

were much harassed by the aphis, the boreworm, and the caterpillar. The elder brother, always a wanderer, made frequent expeditions into the interior, and Cecil was often left in sole charge of the cotton fields and the Zulu labourers. He had succeeded, however, in growing a fair crop of cotton, when he received a message from his brother, the effect of which was not only to send the cotton field back into jungle, but to change the face of South Africa. Herbert had been one of a party, mainly of officers of the 20th Regiment, under the leadership of Captain Rolleston, which went prospecting for diamonds, on the banks of the Vaal River. In January 1870, they found them, and the message from Herbert to his brother was—Come.

CHAPTER II

THE DIAMOND DIGGINGS

We are told that Rhodes started for the diamond fields "in a Scotch cart drawn by a team of oxen, carrying with him a bucket and a spade, several volumes of the classics and a Greek lexicon." [1] This is no doubt true, although by that time there was between Durban and the diggings a post-cart service which did the journey in five days, travelling day and night. All the world was going that way. The wash, remember, had been discovered not quite two years before, in January 1870, by the prospecting party to which Herbert Rhodes belonged. But from the beginning it had made a great sensation. Sailors deserted from their ships, soldiers from their

[1] Michell.

regiments, settlers left their farms, workmen broke their contracts, tradesmen sold their stores. The Dean of Grahamstown, writing to the *Times* in 1870, tells how he had lost his organist and the tenor voices of his choir, and the bricklayer who had been working at his cathedral. He had indeed lost a large part of his diocese, for the people of the town were organising themselves into little companies of from four to sixteen persons, and going up-country in ox wagons, in Cape carts, in any sort of vehicle. And diggers came from oversea, from Australia, from California, from English countryside and English Universities, from Whitechapel, from Berlin. In three great streams they flowed perpetually to the diamond fields. As early as 1870 we hear of thirty wagons arriving in one day, and a train of a hundred wagons being hourly expected from Natal. It was the beginning of a revolution that changed the face and the politics of South Africa in two years.

Never had more new wine been poured into an older bottle. Let us remember that at that time the whole interior of the country was a wilderness known only to the pastoral Boer and the big game hunter. The railway from the Cape had only got as far as Wellington, fifty miles from the coast; there was the new and well-built road up Bain's Kloof; and thence, through the Karoo, only a track of wagon wheels from farm to farm, and the skeletons of oxen by the roadside and at the drifts. The farms were thinly starred over a desolate country, each farm on the site of some rare spring or vlei, or dam, where there was water—good to brackish. The Dutch farmer was primitive, ignorant, hospitable. He lived on his sheep and cattle; his breeches were of leather, his shoes of untanned hide; his

vrouw made soap and candles from mutton fat; his fire was made of trampled dung from the fold. This race of farmers divided the country between them in farms of from fifteen thousand to forty thousand acres, save in those parts which were thought to be useless, or where the natives were too strong to be driven out.

The country was parched and barren, save when rain fell, and then there was a sudden and vivid blossoming of flowers. For most of the year there was nothing but the veld bush, low shrubs with succulent leaves, and round every bush several yards of hard, dry earth. On the wide horizons lay ranges of red dolorite rock, steep, scarred, and bare, the kops and kopjes of the veld.

The diamonds were found over a large tract of country hitherto thought utterly worthless, and of doubtful ownership, between the Orange and the Vaal. To the south was the Cape Colony; to the east the Orange Free State, a republic of pastoral farmers, governed patriarchally by President Brand; to the north-east the Transvaal, another republic of the same sort; to the north was the land of the Griquas, Bechuanas; to the west lay the land of the Namaquas and the Kalihari Desert. The country of the diamonds was thought by some to belong to Waterboer, a Griqua chief; by others to the Orange Free State; while the Transvaal made a still more shadowy claim to the territory. Before Rhodes arrived it had been taken over by the British Government. It was country, at the time of the discovery, thought to be worth a few shillings per thousand acres (with no buyers). A good deal of it had neither bush nor grass, and was "little frequented even by wild game."

The Vaal River made a pleasant oasis in this vast desert. The Vaal River was here as broad as the Thames at Chelsea or Battersea, a pleasant stream, whose banks were umbrageous with yellow-wood, acacias, and willows. Here in the river gravel the first diamonds were found, the diggers leading a pleasant life under the acacia trees—"the number of tents and people something beyond conception," writes an early visitor. "All look well and jolly," and he describes how diggers, when they were asked, What luck? would sometimes take from ten to a score of diamonds out of their trouser pockets. It was a free and happy life, in the tent, round the camp fire, under the blue sky, knee deep in the rushing water. The diggers, "dressed in corduroy or shoddy, high-booted, bare as to arms and breast, with beard of any length, girt with a butcher's knife on a belt of leather." A writer in the *Grahamstown Journal* tells how a Mr. Waldeck was seen "jumping, dancing, and shouting." The diggers stopped work and crowded round him. He had found a diamond of seventeen and a half carats. The excitement is easy to understand, for single stones were often found worth from £1500 to £2000 apiece. In a few months one company of diggers, the Natal Company, sent home £12,000 worth of diamonds. Fortunes were made at a throw, and the diggers worked from dawn to dark, some picking and shovelling the gravel, others washing it in cradles in the river, others sorting the wet gravel on rough tables. "The men scoop out the wet gravel on a table with a piece of tin or wood, take one glance, and then another scrape turns it off. This goes on at a rate which novices cannot but consider most hazardous;

but the diamond shines out like a star whensoever it appears."

A merry life under the blue sky, with lots of hard work and lots of money. We hear of £650 on a single game of cards, and the two billiard tables at Klip Drift did a roaring trade. There is a rough romance, as of the Wild West, in the mere names of these diggings—Pneil, Gong-Gong, and Delport's Hope; Forlorn Hope, Blue Jacket, Waldeck's Plant, and Larkin's Flat. Yet there was no shooting, and little disorder. If a digger misbehaved himself, he was brought before "President Parker," the chairman of the Diggers' Committee, and condemned to be spread-eagled, or dragged through the river if his sin was great. President Brand was popular; but his authority was laughed at. When his field cornets rode in to vindicate the majesty of the law, the diggers chaffed them and stood them drinks, but paid them little or no respect. They did what was good in their own eyes. On Sunday they might listen to "the Rev. Mr. Clulee of Bloemfontein" preaching in a tent "the simple gospel of Christ from the parable of the pearl of great price." More often they gathered in Sanger's saloon in Klipdrift to play billiards and cards. Once a fortnight there was a joyous muster of diggers, who marched in line to the strains of Vos's Bloemfontein band, with the British ensign borne proudly aloft in the van.

CHAPTER III

RHODES AND BARNATO

As the months went on, and rush succeeded rush, the diggers drifted away from the pleasant river banks into the barren wilderness beyond. In the open veld, twenty-five miles from the river, lay the farm of Dutoit's Pan, standing by its pan or pond of brackish water. The farmer's children had found diamonds on the side of the hill that rose from the water, and the rumour of the discovery spread. Thousands of diggers crowded in upon the farmer, pegged out his land without as much as a by-your-leave, and soon the whole hillside was swarming with diggers. The diamonds lay not merely on the surface; but below in the red gravelly boulder-strewn sand. The whole place was like a great gravel pit, the miners throwing the debris anywhere in their eagerness to sift the greatest amount of gravel in the shortest possible time. Soon, the diggers said, we will get through this red sand, and then there will be no more diamonds. Below the red sand were chalk nodules, and then came a brittle yellowish white soft rock. Some of the diggers left in despair; but others pounded the rock to powder and found diamonds. Then came another find, at Old De Beers, a mile away, and then still another, "the New Rush," the greatest of all, on the neighbouring "Colesberg Kopje." The New Rush, or Kimberley, as it came to be called,[1] eclipsed all the other finds, and became

[1] After Lord Kimberley, the Secretary of State who presided over the annexation.

the centre of the busy rowdy feverish hive of workers.

Here, then, came Rhodes. He had crossed the great range of the Drakensberg, then unknown to fame; he had passed the little Boer capital of Bloemfontein, where Jan Brand kept his republic in order; he had dipped down to the Vaal and seen the river diggers at work under the willows; and had reached New Rush only a week or two after the territory came under the British flag. His cart threaded its way through the barbarous debris of the outskirts, Kafir huts, skeletons of oxen and horses—and not skeletons merely but evil-smelling carcases—Boer wagons, and the rising mountains of gravel and white sand. Thus he stumbled upon a city of some forty thousand people—a city but a few months old, a city without one tree or spire or tall building, a city built of tent cloth and corrugated iron. The place was growing like Jack's beanstalk—stores, canteens, little houses of wooden framework and canvas, with window frames bound with ribbon—a business street where the diamond dealers bid against one another for the finds of the diggers. But the centre of interest was the mine itself—the wonderful mine which was to transform Rhodes from a penniless boy to a great power in the world, and was already transforming South Africa from an almost penniless and bankrupt country to a centre of wealth, speculation, and business and political activity.

Let me describe this mine as it was in the early days. The kopje, with its gravel and boulders, had been cleared bodily away. Beneath was found the soft white rock I have already described. It had the form of a circular pipe some nine acres in extent, with a regularly defined edge of talcose shale all

round it like a rind, or outer wall. How far this pocket or pipe went down no one could tell—that was the gamble of the mine; but inside the encircling cliff the soft grey rock was all diamondiferous, the diamonds being scattered through it thinly, yet with some rough approach to evenness, although the outside claims were reckoned to be the most valuable. Each of the original diggers had been allowed to stake a single claim of 31 feet square, and the committee, profiting by its experience at Dutoitspan, had ordained that roads should be preserved across the mine, and that all the "stuff" should be taken out of the mine and sorted beyond its limit. As the miners went down the roads became gangways, and the waste became growing mountains of white sand, for the soft rock or hard clay which contained the diamonds disintegrated in the open air into a sand so fine and light that it floated like dust in the air, and when a wind blew drifted like snow. The gangways also crumbled and fell, sometimes burying the diggers below, and as the mine went down it became more and more difficult to cart the stuff out of the mine to the breakers and sorters who worked beside the growing mountains round the edge. Thus it came about that round the edge of the oval-shaped cauldron a framework of timberwork had to be built, tier below tier, and on the floors thus improvised winches were rigged up with ropes passing inward and down to the claims below. These claims were of various depths according to the energy and resources of their owners, and some had been divided into halves, fourths, or even sixteenths. The bottom of the mine was thus a rough uneven checker of squares like a piece of shepherd's plaid, criss-crossed by innumerable ropes which formed a spider's-web

above the diggers. Below, the gangs worked loading the buckets; above, they worked at the creaking winches. As the buckets appeared at the top they were passed on to the pounders and sorters who worked at their tables in the open air. The rough work was generally done by gangs of Kafirs, the owners supervising and sorting at the tables. The diamonds were sold either to the merchants in their offices or to the "kopje wallopers," diamond buyers in a smaller way of business who threaded their way from table to table, or from tent to tent, chaffing, chaffering, cheating the diggers when they could, and usually with an eye open for the Kafir boy who waited round some corner with a diamond he had concealed between his toes.

In all this there was ample room for speculation, both in the value of single stones and in the value of whole claims, for diggers drank and gambled, came and went. Some retired with fortunes, others "broke to the world." When the "hard blue" was reached fifty to sixty feet down, many thought that "the bottom was knocked out of the mine," and left in disgust; others were discouraged by a flooding of their claims or the fall of a gangway of crumbling tufa; still others were sickened by the glare and the dust. "The dust of the dry diggings," says one, "is to be classed with plague, pestilence, and famine, and if there is anything worse with that also." They left for their old haunts of the river diggings under the willows by the cool waters of the Vaal.

But there were two young men who meant to see the game out—one a digger, the other a "kopje walloper." They were both young, both shrewd and able above their fellows; but here the likeness ended. The digger was Cecil Rhodes, then a long, lanky

youth, in cricketing flannels many times washed and stained a brick red with the sand of the veld. He had come, as we know, at his brother's suggestion, his brother holding a claim in New Rush. His work was to superintend their gang of Kafirs, or sort diamonds on the edge of the mine. Not a few friends and acquaintances have recorded their impression of Rhodes at that time, and they all speak of him as abstracted, silent, plunged in thought. We have a picture of him sitting on an inverted bucket with his chin on his hand, gazing down into the depths of the great pit. "I have many times seen him," says another, "dressed in white flannels leaning moodily with his hand in his pockets against a street wall." Herbert one day trekked for the north, and never returned, but Cecil remained. From digging he took to dealing in claims, and the firms of Rhodes, Rudd, and Alderson were busy at work amalgamating in a small way as early as 1873. At first the business must have been wildly speculative; we hear of one Arie Smuts buying a claim for £50, and finding diamonds worth from £15,000 to £20,000 in two months. The claims went up in value until they were worth, about the time when Rhodes arrived, from £2000 to £4000 a piece. But there were wide fluctuations, due to flooding or over-buying, or nervousness in the money market. The firm missed great chances from mere want of cash, for the banks, according to Michell, treated them with scant respect. Yet Rhodes, by all accounts, handled this difficult business with boldness and skill. Even by 1875 he was "a man of some importance and authority." His partners and friends gave him good backing. Charles Dunell Rudd, a Harrow and Cambridge man, nine years his senior, was one of them; but the man

upon whom Rhodes came chiefly to rely was Alfred Beit, a young diamond buyer from Hamburg, a Jew with the best traditions of the best Jews behind him. He came, as Michell tells us, of "a wealthy and honourable family," and he himself was the soul of honour. Rhodes was the mind that conceived and rough-hewed the schemes; Beit helped him through all the delicate operations of finance. Thus the firm grew in strength until by 1880 the first De Beers Mining Company was registered, with a capital of £200,000.

And now as to Rhodes's rival. "The only man he feared in South Africa was a cunning little Jew called Barnato"—so, according to Barnato himself, Rhodes was heard to say about this time. Barney Barnato was a Whitechapel Jew, with the worst traditions of the worst Jews behind him. I do not know if that astonishing classic of the gutter, *Reminiscences of Kimberley*, may be taken anywhere as evidence. It is a book over which the judicious will grieve and the injudicious—of whom I count myself one—will laugh; a gross, merry-hearted book, written by an illiterate Scarron with a natural gift. If the book is anywhere true, it should be true of Barnato, with whom Cohen lived and worked, and slept, and revelled. "Barney loved me better than any man," says Cohen, "and would have done anything for me in the world—bar give me sixpence." Barnato told him of his youth—how he stood outside the Garrick Theatre in Leman Street and begged pass-out checks from the theatre-goers, selling them for halfpence, and we get another picture of him—"a little, weakly, sorrowful child sitting crying on a doorstep in Middlesex Street." In such hard schools he learned resource and sharpness of wit, learned to use his fists as well as his

head and his tongue. We see him first impudent, ignorant, self-confident, " wearing a silver chain and watch that would not go ' as a mark of respect,' " beating the kopjes for stray diamonds with his partner Cohen. For a time their capital was only £30, and forty boxes of doubtful cigars. But they were full of resource, energy, high spirits. At one time the firm were being badly beaten by a buyer who rode a pony in and out among the tents and wagons where the Boer diggers lived and sold their findings. The firm tried to follow him, and find out who his customers were, but without success. But one day the rival sold his pony and Barney bought it. He had noted that his rival rode with a loose rein, and sure enough when Barney rode it through the camp the pony stopped at every wagon where business was to be done. The beast served for introduction, and the firm took over its goodwill.

Such stories as we have of Barnato indicate a man shrewd, cunning, ruled by the love of money, learning to handle men with the false bonhomie of the street corner. Like Rhodes he believed in amalgamation, and he raced neck and neck with his rival, till by 1880 he floated the Barnato Mining Company, comprising some of the richest claims in the Kimberley mine. Thus in the same year the young Englishman and the young Jew marshalled their forces and stood out above the ruck of claims and interests, the giants of the clever, busy, speculative, little financial world of Kimberley. For the next eight years they were to struggle for the mastery, until in the end the best man won, and Rhodes consolidated the Diamond Fields upon his own terms.

CHAPTER IV

RHODES KEEPS HIS TERMS

But I would give a false idea of Rhodes's life if I told the story of these seventeen years as if diamonds and the making of wealth were his only or even his chief interest. It is strange, it is almost miraculous, that in the first half of that time Rhodes should be living the life of the Oxford undergraduate, and in the second half, of the South African statesman. Rhodes never cared for money either for itself or for the pleasure it is fabled to give. He sought for money to accomplish his ends, and these ends were not selfish, but nothing less than the good of his country. There is warrant for saying that in the early seventies he had already determined to devote his life to the service of the Empire, and to the end this remained his single aim. And with this devotion to the cause of England, he loved her soil and her people, and he loved the honour and learning of Oxford. I do not know how he came to fall in love with Oxford, for Bishop's Stortford is on the way to Cambridge and his father was a Trinity College man. But Rhodes loved beauty, he loved caste, he loved tradition, he loved the poetry, or, as might be said, the soul of Old England. And all this is to be found, as some think, in richest measure under the royal towers of Oxford. Cambridge holds a more austere and Puritan tradition, and Rhodes was a humanist. He belonged to the age not of Cromwell, but Elizabeth. He had the chivalry, the poetry, the vast and human

conceptions of our English Renaissance. So I think in spirit he was drawn to Oxford.

Oriel was his college. He matriculated on 13th October 1873, and kept the Michaelmas term. He was there through three terms in 1876, spending the long vacation at Kimberley ; in 1877 he kept all four terms, but again went to Kimberley for the long vacation. In 1878 he kept three terms before returning to South Africa, and in 1881, a marvellous year, he took his seat in the Cape Parliament in April, and graduated at Oxford in December. He was not a worker at Oxford ; perhaps he looked upon it as a delightful holiday. He was taken for "a good, quiet fellow, with the instincts of an Englishman," and attained a modest degree of eminence as Master of the Drag Hunt in 1876. One college friend quoted by Michell says : "I remember he was keen on polo, which was not so common in those days. I went with him to a wine, and was amused to notice how much older in manner the other undergraduates were than Cecil. They were full of that spurious wisdom assumed by many young men as a defensive armour, an armour he did not require." It is, indeed, amusing to think of him discussing life and politics with the undergraduate upon equal terms, and then returning to Africa to hold his own against some of the ablest financial and political minds of his generation. "We used to chaff him," says another, "about his long vacation trips to South Africa, when he always cheerily replied that we would be surprised one day at developments there." It was a double life, but, as we shall see, it had a single purpose.

CHAPTER V

SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICS

I MIGHT almost say it was a treble life, for his career in Oxford and his career in politics overlapped. Thus he took his seat in the Cape Parliament on 7th April 1881, and he kept his Michaelmas term and took his degree that same year. It is worth while at this point to attempt a broad view of the politics of South Africa as they were then. There are three main factors in the problem—the racial factor, the geographical factor, and the imperial factor. As to the first, there are again three main divisions, English, Dutch, and Native. The English were chiefly concentrated in the coast towns—Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London, and Durban; but they also occupied most of the colony of Natal and most of the Eastern Province of Cape Colony. They worked the diamond industry of Kimberley, and they formed a trading population even in up-country towns like Bloemfontein and Pretoria. In the Cape Colony the professional men and the Civil Service were largely English. They were besides the engineers, the railway builders, the prospectors, the schoolmasters, of South Africa, the banking, the shipping, and the export trade were mainly in their hand. Thus they formed a fringe along the coast and islands in the interior, and were the brains and progressive force of South Africa. But politically they were divided, for Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, and Durban were rivals for the trade of the back country. They all com-

manded roads to Kimberley and to the interior republics. They fought a continuous war of trade rivalry. Kimberley, again, had nothing in common with the coast ports except race, for the coast ports were traders and Kimberley was a producer. When the railway came, it divided rather than united, for the coast towns strove to maintain high railway rates so as to make Kimberley and the interior pay the Government revenues. Natal, of course, was a separate colony; but Durban was none the less a trade rival. The English, therefore, were politically weak, for they had no common interest except the interest of race to bind them together.

The Dutch, on the other hand, were mainly farmers with a sprinkling of rich and professional men—attorneys, predikants, civil servants. They were the farmers and pastoralists of South Africa, and formed a continuous and related population over the larger part of Cape Colony, and the two republics, the Orange Free State and the Transvaal. In the republics they ruled in name and in fact. In the Orange Free State, President Brand, a wise and moderate Dutchman, maintained an attitude of friendliness to the British Government. In the Transvaal President Kruger was already supreme. His burghers had just ended a successful war against England with the victory of Majuba on 27th February 1881. They had defeated the British power in South Africa, and had regained an independence which they had lost through their own inability to rule their own territories. From that time Kruger pursued a policy of growing ambition. He made constant attempts to extend his territory by raids upon the surrounding natives. He used all the means in his power to reach the sea, so as to have an inde-

pendent port; he intrigued both with the Radicals in England and with Germany to weaken the Imperial power, and, as time went on and the gold fields developed, he tried by economic pressure to bring the coast colonies under his influence and domination. But this policy developed, as we shall see, from year to year. In the Cape Colony, while the British were nominally in power, Mr. Hofmeyr, a wary and able Dutch politician, handled his block of Dutch votes with such skill and address that he usually had much his own way. Each English Prime Minister in turn made his compact with Hofmeyr; Sprigg was the Mikado, Hofmeyr was the Shogun of Cape Colony. Thus, in political influence we find the Dutch supreme in the two republics, and with much power, sometimes dominating power, in the Cape Colony. As to the natives, they were already broken up into islands. Zululand had been completely subjected by the Imperial troops; the Cape Colony was gradually extending her rule eastward towards Natal, but had failed to break the strong Basuto nation embattled in its Switzerland round the head-waters of the Orange. The Transvaal, freed from the Zulu menace, raided the natives round its borders—the Zulus and Swazis on the east, the Bechuanas on the west. These native races looked to the missionaries and to the Imperial power behind the missionaries for protection. All these native powers lay at the white man's mercy, even although the white man might occasionally suffer defeat. They were divided or surrounded, or had their backs against sea or mountain range or desert. They could only put up a defence which in the end was bound to be overborne. But away in the north, beyond the Transvaal, lay the great power of the Matabele, a

power comparable to the power of the Zulus under Chaka. They were Zulus by race; they occupied a country whose size and limits were unknown—an enormous country, high and healthy. On the east lay the Mashona people, whom they held in subjection, and on either side—in Angola, in Mozambique, the feeble white power of the Portuguese. Behind them stretched illimitably the great plateau of Central Africa towards the Congo, the great lakes, the Soudan. The Matabele, warlike, numerous, disciplined, unconquered, held the gates of the North.

The Imperial factor we have already seen defeating the Zulu power, but defeated by the Dutch at Majuba. It held the sea, its Lieutenant-Governor ruled Natal, its Governor and High Commissioner occupied a position of constitutional supremacy in the Cape Colony, and watched over the welfare and independence of the interior natives. It was a factor uncertain and incalculable, great in potential but weak in actual force. It was unwilling to rule except with one foot in the sea. It gave the Orange Free State its independence against the wishes of the inhabitants; it gave the Cape Colony responsible government against the wishes of a majority of its inhabitants; it annexed the Transvaal unwillingly and relinquished it eagerly; it abandoned its own subjects in Bloemfontein and Pretoria; and to the natives it afforded a reluctant and uncertain protection. It was generally well served by its soldiers and civilians on the spot; but, having no policy, its influence was weak, treacherous, and, as I have said, incalculable.

And lastly the geographical factor. The great plateau of Africa is approached from the low land of the coast line by a series of mountain steps. That is

the general configuration. In the south the coast land and the mountain valleys are healthy and valuable; to the east and west they are unhealthy, and therefore uncoveted. For that reason, a feeble power like Portugal has been allowed to occupy Angola and Mozambique for centuries. South of Angola, the Germans were about to occupy Damaraland, a more southerly, and therefore more healthy country, but waterless and harbourless. Thence to Portuguese territory at Delagoa Bay was either British or under British influence. The interior republics were forced to do their trade through British ports—forced, that is, until the Delagoa Bay Railway should be opened, for the road through that territory was so unhealthy as to be uneconomical. The road from Natal was difficult and mountainous. The Cape had thus a practical monopoly. It followed that the Cape could impose its own transport and customs rates upon the republics. If it exercised this power wisely and moderately, it might hope to retain the republican trade; if unwisely, it might force the Transvaal to develop the Delagoa Bay route. As to the great regions of the interior, the road lay north from Kimberley through Bechuanaland, a strip of territory bounded on one side by the Transvaal, and on the other shading away into the Kalihari Desert. He who held that territory held the key to the North.

These, in broadest outline, were the conditions —some permanent, others transitory—which ruled South Africa when Rhodes entered Parliament in 1881.

CHAPTER VI

THE ROAD TO THE NORTH

Now it is a matter of great interest, as bearing on the life and character of Rhodes, to know why he entered the Cape Parliament in 1881. He did not enter politics with a mere vague notion of coming to the front, of gaining power, of securing something for Kimberley, of protecting the diamond industry. He had something bigger in view. He had hammered it all out beforehand, sitting on the upturned bucket looking into the depths of the mine. He had his policy, and his policy was nothing less than this—the union of South Africa under the British flag.

I have already mentioned that long before Rhodes went into Parliament at all he had expressed his intention to devote his life to the British Empire. And he had determined not merely on this end; but on the means to the end. He had to use not the Imperial factor—that was a broken reed—but the Dutch themselves; he had to make the Cape Colony the dominant power in South Africa, controlling the railway system, controlling the interior, hemming in the republics, commanding the trade, so that when the union came to be made, the republics would adhere to the Colony, and not the Colony to the republics.

He made his declaration of faith early—only two years after he entered Parliament. Speaking in the Cape House on July 18, 1883, he said: "I have my

own views as to the future of South Africa, and I believe in a United States of South Africa, but as a portion of the British Empire. I believe that confederated states, in a colony under responsible government, would each be practically an independent republic, but I think we should also have all the privileges of the tie with the Empire." That was in reply to a speech made by Jan Hofmeyr at a Bond Congress, where he had spoken of a "United States of South Africa under its own flag." It is proof sufficient of the end in view, and now as to the means. In 1898 he said to his constituents: "I will give you the history of a thought. I have been seventeen years your member. . . . When I was elected I went down to the Cape Parliament, thinking, in my practical way, I will go and take the North."

This was no empty boast, for, going back over his speeches, we find that he had publicly declared himself in the House, at least as early as August 16, 1883, when he said: "I look upon this Bechuanaland territory as the Suez Canal of the trade of this country, the key of its road to the interior. The House will have to wake up to what will be its future policy. The question before us really is this, whether this Colony is to be confined to its present borders, or whether it is to become the dominant state in South Africa—whether, in fact, it is to spread its civilisation over the interior." Probably this declaration was made two years earlier, for we know that Rhodes spoke on June 15, 1881, on this same question, although, most unfortunately, no record of that speech remains. But I have said enough to show that both the end and the means were in Rhodes's mind in those early political days. He was a man who laid

down his plans at the beginning, and followed them year after year.

We have the whole idea not only clearly expressed, but beautifully illuminated in a speech made on June 23, 1887 : " I am not going to say that you could make a united South Africa to the Zambesi to-morrow, but I do say that this thing could be done gradually by promoting the means to the end. . . . I have the satisfaction of knowing that in the disorganised state of this House, I can come down session after session with an object and an idea. To express it a little more clearly, it is as if I were a little sailing-boat on Table Bay, and knew exactly what port I am aiming for. The honourable member for Stellenbosch (Mr. Hofmeyr) has no bait that can tempt me. I know exactly what I am after. I have got my interest in this country, I have my mining speculation, I have my interest in its future, and, coupled with all this, I am a member of the House. Every year I can come down here and work at my problem. It took me fifteen years to get a mine, but I got it. Though my boat may be slow in the race, I know exactly what I am starting for. There are honourable members opposite who have racing boats, but I dare to challenge them, and to say that they do not know what ports they are sailing for ; and though they may be manned with a smarter crew, what with their backing and filling, I am not sure they will not scuttle and go to the bottom. I have an object, and I can wait to carry it out."

When Rhodes went to Cape Town he found politics unstable and uncertain. Gordon Sprigg was in office ; but he was supported only by a majority of two, and he already depended on the Dutch vote as organised by Jan Hofmeyr, the " mole," as Merriman

called him—the "Captain who never appears on deck," as he was more respectfully described by Mackenzie. Hofmeyr could not take office because his Dutch following had no experience of affairs, so he ruled a nominated Ministry from the back benches. Sprigg was content with the position; he had been a reporter in the House of Commons, and knew all the technical tricks of the Parliamentary trade; he was a dry and arid man who managed Ministerial affairs with the narrow efficiency of a good clerk; but remained in ignorance of the springs of human nature and of his own political power. He was a Shagpat complacently ignorant of the fact that his power lay in a hair of Jan Hofmeyr's head. He had got the Colony into a bad mess by an attempt to disarm the Basutos—in the obvious interest of Hofmeyr's good friends of the Orange Free State. The Basutos had resisted, and, being brave men, strongly entrenched in their mountain country, they had defeated the Colonial troops. Rhodes found his Colony beaten by a native power in a war in which, as he believed, the native was in the right. For the rest, Sprigg was refusing to build the railway to Kimberley, a project both profitable and necessary, and was preparing instead an enormous programme of railways, which would have been of benefit to the Dutch farmer, at a cost of twelve millions to the Colony. With the Colonial finances as they were, such a policy meant bankruptcy. Rhodes acted with decision. He had been returned to support the Sprigg Ministry. He refused to support them; he carried his colleague with him. The majority of two was thus turned into a minority of two, and Sprigg was forced to resign. Rhodes returned to a hostile Kimberley, and in a single speech con-

verted his critics. Thus in his first session, the young politician of twenty-eight had proved his power by turning out a Ministry he had been sent to support and carrying his constituency with him.

The Scanlen Ministry succeeded, and Rhodes was given a hand in the settlement of the Basutoland question as Compensation Commissioner. His view was that the Colony had made such a mess of the affair that it could neither carry on the war nor administer Basutoland upon a peace. The only thing to be done was to hand the country over to a British Resident under the Colonial Office. Gordon, who had been asked by Scanlen to make a settlement, had come to the same conclusion, and after some delay this policy was carried out, and with complete success. In the course of these negotiations Rhodes and Gordon came to know each other well —knew, loved, and trusted each other. Two years later, when Gordon went to the Soudan, he telegraphed to Rhodes to join him; and when Rhodes heard of Gordon's death he exclaimed more than once, "I am sorry I was not with him."

Rhodes wanted Basutoland out of the way. He saw there was no advance in that direction. With its large and warlike native population, entrenched in their mountains, truculent with victory, it was likely to be a disastrous embarrassment for the Cape Government. He saw a better future for his Colony than in this deadly tangle of *waachte-en-beetje* thorn. He meant to have the North, "the Suez Canal of the trade of South Africa." That is, he meant to make the Cape Colony have it, so that the road to the interior should be kept open under the British flag. He knew that settlers from the Transvaal, the "freebooters," as they were called,

were already swarming into the country, and he shrewdly suspected that the Transvaal Government designed to take it over. He knew also that Germany was bent upon securing Damaraland; and he knew that if the Transvaal and Germany joined hands the road to the interior was lost. He set to work with his usual care and circumspection. He discovered that the Colonial boundaries in Griqualand West were incorrectly aligned; as a matter of fact they included seventy farms on the territory of Mankoroane, the Bechuana chief. In 1882 he moved for a Commission of Inquiry, was himself appointed a commissioner, and went up to Griqualand West with an official status. He found the Bechuanas extremely nervous at the incursion of the Boers. Mankoroane was willing to place himself under the protection of the Cape Colony so as to secure himself in the remainder of his land. As for the freebooters, they were already in "effective occupation" of their farms, and their chief anxiety was to secure their titles to the land. At the price of security, they were also willing to be annexed to the Colony. Thus Rhodes returned to Cape Town with petitions for annexation both from Mankoroane and the Stellaland freebooters. It was a splendid piece of work, when it is thought over. He was a young Englishman, unknown, with no power behind him, and by mere negotiation he secured the most important part of South Africa for his country. His method had the fine simplicity of genius. He pointed out to the freebooters that under a Cape title their land would be worth more per morgen than under a Transvaal title. And to the natives he pointed out that only the Cape Government would secure them in such land as they still possessed.

He went back to the Cape exulting; but he rejoiced too soon. The Parliament of the Colony was by this time under the control of men who saw the future of South Africa not British but Dutch, not Imperial but Republican. Their policy was to strengthen and extend the Transvaal so as to make it the dominant State of South Africa, trusting that when union came the whole would then take the colour of the dominant part. For that reason Jan Hofmeyr and his friends refused the option secured to the Colony by Rhodes. Rhodes, speaking in the House, put the subject forcibly, cogently, almost passionately, before Parliament: "You are dealing," he said, "with a question upon the proper treatment of which depends the whole future of this Colony. I look upon this Bechuanaland territory as the Suez Canal of the trade of this country, the key of its road to the interior. The question before us is this: whether the Colony is to be confined within its present borders, or whether it is to become the dominant State in South Africa, and spread its civilisation over the interior." It is a remarkable speech, this speech of 16th August 1883, for it contains, as it were in the germ, the future of South Africa. In reply to Hofmeyr, he pointed to the hostile policy of the Transvaal, which was already arranging with Delagoa Bay a tariff which would annihilate the Cape trade. If the Transvaal were to take over Stellaland the interior could be shut against them. The interior was a great country, almost empty, and suitable for settlement by the sons of Cape Colony. "I have," he said, "been favoured with reports from Tati, and I have learned how great are the prospects of the territory beyond the Transvaal," and he ended with a solemn warning:

"I solemnly warn this House that if it departs from the control of the interior, we shall fall from the position of the paramount State in South Africa, which is our right in every scheme of federal union in the future, to that of a minor state."

This appeal was made in vain, and Van Niekerk, the freebooter, proclaimed his republic of Stellaland, which everyone knew was a preliminary to annexation by the Transvaal. But Rhodes refused to be beaten. Through the High Commissioner, Sir Hercules Robinson, also a staunch and loyal servant of the Empire, he interested Lord Derby in the matter, and persuaded Sir Thomas Scanlen to take joint responsibility for the territory with the Imperial Government. But again Hofmeyr countered the move: the Cape Parliament repudiated the arrangement. But events were to force the Colonial Office further on the road, even if the Cape refused to follow. On the 1st of May 1883 the German flag was hoisted at Angra Pequena, a move that Rhodes had tried in vain to prevent. Sir Hercules warned the Home Government that Kruger and Bismarck would join hands across Africa. Lord Derby at last took decisive action. By the Convention of London the Transvaal boundary was definitely fixed on lines that left the road to the interior outside the republic. That was on February 27, 1884, and on the same day Bechuanaland was made a Protectorate. But Kruger was not yet beaten. He knew by experience that the Imperial factor was weak and vacillating. He therefore raided east and west, supporting his freebooters both in Zululand and Bechuanaland. Mr. Merriman described the President's policy at this time with perfect accuracy: "From the time," he said, "the Convention was signed, the policy of the Transvaal

was to push out bands of freebooters, and to get them involved in quarrels with the natives. They wished to push their border over the land westwards and realise the dream of President Pretorius, which was that the Transvaal should stretch from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic. The result was robbery, rapine, and murder."

The situation was complicated by the fact that the Colonial Office had entrusted the charge of the new Protectorate to John Mackenzie, the missionary. Now a good deal has been made of the difference between Mackenzie and Rhodes; but I have space only to state briefly my conclusions on a very bulky controversy.

Mackenzie, then, held the Livingstone view, that the natives were the true owners of the soil, and that the Dutch were wrongful usurpers. The Dutch, let us remember, had attacked Livingstone's mission station, massacred his people, and carried away his four hundred mission children into slavery. It was Mackenzie's object to make Bechuanaland a native reserve under Imperial protection, and this involved the expulsion of the Dutch settlers. Now in justice Mackenzie had a strong case; but it was a case not only against the Dutch settlement in Bechuanaland, but the white settlement in South Africa. Rhodes, on the other hand, recognised the accomplished fact. The Dutch were there, and any attempt to drive them out must fail because it would enlist upon their side the whole white population of South Africa. The Imperial factor would give way; it had withdrawn from the Orange Free State; it had withdrawn from the Transvaal. It would withdraw from Bechuanaland. Moreover, Rhodes regarded the white settlement of South Africa as not only inevitable but

desirable. It was like the settlement of America which dispossessed the Red Indians. Rhodes was willing to compromise: the natives should have sufficient locations; they should be left the right to hunt and to farm on their own land as well as to work on the land of the white settler; but they must not bar the progress of the white man. In the speech I have summarised he put his point of view: "The republic of Stellaland," he said, "was offered as their territory. Some honourable members may say that this is immorality to deal with these men at all after what has occurred. 'The lands,' they may say, 'belong to the chief Mankoroane. How improper! How immoral! We must not do it.' Now I have not these scruples. I believe that the natives are bound gradually to come under the control of the Europeans. I feel that it is the duty of this Colony, when, as it were, her younger and more fiery sons go out and take land, to follow in their steps with civilised government."

Whatever may be said on the score of ethics, Rhodes's was the only practicable policy. But the matter had gone too far for settlement without force. Rhodes, who was sent up by Sir Hercules Robinson in supersession of Mackenzie, went straight to the Stellaland ringleaders, Van Niekerk and De la Rey, encamped with a commando on the Hartz River. He found them in a dangerous mood. "I shall never forget our meeting," said Rhodes long afterwards. "When I spoke to De la Rey, his answer was, 'Blood must flow,' to which I remember making the retort: 'No, give me my breakfast, and then we can talk about blood.' Well, I stayed with him a week. I became godfather to his grandchild, and we made a settlement. Those who were serving under De la

Rey and Van Niekerk got their farms, and I secured the government of the country for Her Majesty the Queen, which I believe was the right policy, and so both sides were more or less satisfied."

Rhodes succeeded with Stellaland; but he failed with the other freebooting settlement of Goshen. Like Stellaland, Goshen lay across the road to the interior, and here Kruger made his stand. Rhodes arrived at Rooi Grond to find Kruger's commissioner, Joubert, hand in glove with the freebooters. They were in laager round the kraal of Montsoia, the Bechuana chief, at Mafeking, and the very night that Rhodes arrived they made a determined attack upon the hard-pressed garrison. Rhodes protested with vigour both to Joubert and Van Pittius, the leader of the freebooters. He pointed out to them that they were attacking a tribe under the protection of Her Majesty. But his warning went unheeded. He withdrew after receiving a despairing message from Montsoia that if he surrendered it was merely to save his women and children from massacre. A few days after Rhodes left, Montsoia did surrender, and Kruger, "in the interests of humanity," proclaimed the annexation of Montsoia's country to the Transvaal. This was too much for the Imperial Government. The Warren Expedition was the result.

Colonel Warren advanced into Bechuanaland with a fine fighting force of four thousand men. Kruger was in no position to resist. His treasury was bankrupt, and his forces inadequate. Colonel Warren besides was advancing on his soft side; there was no Drakensbergen to help the defence. Kruger therefore submitted with as good a grace as he could

summon. The two parties met at Fourteen Streams on 7th February 1885. Warren, against the advice of Rhodes, still Deputy Commissioner, was accompanied also by Mackenzie. Kruger had with him as secretary Dr. Leyds. Thus Rhodes came face to face with the man against whom he had hitherto worked in the dark. In this the first round of the fight, Kruger was beaten, and sought only to find the best way out. He pleaded that he had been powerless to check the raiders. Rhodes, remembering with indignation the treatment of Montsoia, replied hotly: "I blame only one man for the events that followed my arrival at Rooi Grond, and that is Joubert. Why is he not here to answer for himself?"

But here, as elsewhere, Rhodes was all for a line of policy that would reconcile the Boers to British rule. For that reason he had protested against the presence of Mackenzie, and for that reason he protested against the Warren-Mackenzie scheme of land settlement. The Colonial Office blue-books of the time give a full account of this difference. Warren, influenced by Mackenzie, desired to turn the Boers out of their farms, and he proposed to allow none but British settlers on the land. Such a scheme was fatal to any permanent settlement, and it amounted besides, as Rhodes and Sir Hercules Robinson both held, to a breach of faith with the Stellaland settlers. At the same time Warren arrested Van Niekerk on an unsupported charge of murder. His policy was, in fact, a policy of hostility to the Boers, and Rhodes knew that such a policy was bound to fail. He took a strong course: he resigned, and, being supported by the High Commissioner, in the end he carried the day. And in the end his whole policy was

adopted. The Imperial factor was eliminated,[1] Bechuanaland was taken over by the Colony, and the road to the interior was saved for the Empire.

Rhodes learned a great deal from Bechuanaland; but chiefly he learned that the Cape Colony could not be relied on to support a forward policy as against the Transvaal. This was the weakness of Bond policy as directed by Hofmeyr. It sacrificed the present good of the Cape for the sake of an ultimate end. Of that weakness, as we shall see, Rhodes was to take full advantage. His aim was to arouse the ambition of Cape Colony, to help it to become the dominant state in South Africa, to extend the British Colonial interest to the north, and surround the Transvaal with British Colonial territory, to make the railways and the ports to the interior British Colonial, so that when the time came to federate, the British Colony should be able to determine the character of the federation. Kruger's policy was the exact opposite. He wanted to secure the interior, to open out his own ports, to control the railway system of South Africa, and so, when the time came, to make Pretoria the political centre of South Africa.

CHAPTER VII

THE CONSOLIDATION

And now having seen what Rhodes is trying to do, let us turn to Kimberley for a moment. Kimberley

[1] This phrase has been misunderstood. It is clear from the context, and from the whole course of the controversy, that Rhodes wanted Bechuanaland to be part of a British Colony, and not a Crown Colony, because he feared, if it were under the Imperial Government, it might be surrendered like the Transvaal and the Orange River Sovereignty.

was to be the base of operations, the source of supplies. The diamond mines were of value to Rhodes not for themselves or because they gave him personal wealth, but because they furnished him with the means to carry on his great campaign for a British Africa. We have seen how he gradually turned from digging to dealing in claims, with the general object of consolidating the diamond interest. He worked besides upon contracts, to empty the mine of water, to remove waste ground, and so forth. With immense energy and perseverance, he used such means to his end. There are stories of him scouring the country in a little cart to get wood for the wheezy old farm engine that he used to pump out the water. He met and surmounted a thousand difficulties, throwing them aside, as it were, with his own brawn and sinew, his mind constantly at work arranging detail, marshalling forces, conciliating or defeating opponents. At last, as we have seen, only two great interests were left—Rhodes and his friends in De Beers, and the Barnato Mining Company in the Kimberley Mine. Rhodes controlled his mine; but it could hardly be said that Barnato held the same position in the Kimberley, for the Compagnie Française held some important claims. But even in that company Barnato had an influential share, and Barnato was reckoned to be the more powerful since the Kimberley Mine was richer and bigger than the De Beers. Now it is plain that at this stage amalgamation was to the interests of both men, for not only would a single management lessen working costs, but it would eliminate competition in selling and control the supply. If there is one industry in which monopoly is justified, it is the diamond industry, for the value of diamonds depends on their

scarcity. To flood the market with diamonds would be an economic crime. But while both men saw all this clearly, each was determined only to amalgamate upon his own terms. Barnato was all for his own interests and the interests of his shareholders—he was for strict business: Rhodes was for something more; he wanted to use the wealth of the mines to develop the North, and he proposed that the Consolidated Company should be given the necessary powers. To Barnato this seemed midsummer madness. "Barnato," says Cohen, "often told me that Rhodes was dotty, and I'm sure he fully believed it. He used to gasp with mocking laughter as he spoke of Rhodes's 'crackpot' schemes." So there the negotiations split, and the great fight began. Barnato's weak point, as we have seen, was the holding of the French Company. Rhodes went to Europe, obtained the necessary financial backing, and bought these claims from the directors for £1,400,000. But Barnato had enough influence with the shareholders to organise a successful opposition to this settlement. Rhodes pretended to be beaten. He offered Barnato the claims for their equivalent in Kimberley shares. Barnato eagerly agreed, and so gave Rhodes a great holding in the Kimberley Mine. Then Rhodes began to buy. Prices went up; but he still bought. Barnato's supporters were tempted by the high prices. They fell one by one. Barnato found himself surrounded, overpowered, "bested," as he described it. He had nothing to do but surrender. The final negotiations, as Mr. Raymond tells us,[1] lasted all one morning, afternoon, evening, and night, and at last at four in the morning a settlement was reached. Barnato was made a

[1] *B. I. Barnato. A Memoir.* By Harry Raymond (1897).

Life Governor, and in return Rhodes had his way as to the constitution of the company. "Some people," said Barnato, as he yielded the point, "have a fancy for one thing, some for another. You want the means to go north if possible, and I suppose we must give it you." Only one obstacle remained. Some of the shareholders in the Central Company objected that the Consolidation was illegal because De Beers was not a "similar Company." The case came before the Supreme Court, and the judges were amazed to hear of the powers of this diamond mining trust. "They can do anything and everything, my lord," said counsel for the shareholders; "I suppose since the time of the East India Company, no company has had such power as this. They are not confined to Africa, and they are even authorised to take steps for the good government of any territory; so that, if they obtain a charter in accordance with the trust deed from the Secretary of State, they would be empowered to annex a portion of territory in Central Africa, raise and maintain a standing army, and undertake warlike operations." It is not surprising that the Court decided that this was not merely a diamond company, and the Consolidation was stopped. But Rhodes took a short way with the objectors. He placed the Central Company in liquidation and bought up the property. Thus by January 1889 Rhodes had consolidated the diamond mines, and obtained the financial means for the northern expansion.

CHAPTER VIII

THE TAKING OF THE NORTH

In the second quarter of last century, when the Boer voor-trekkers left the northern outposts of Cape Colony behind them, and passed over the great grassy plains of the country between the Orange and the Vaal, they were met by Umsilikatse and his warriors. The chief and his people were Zulus who had fled from the tyranny of Chaka, and established a new tyranny beyond his reach. Their regiments had slaughtered whole peoples, and driven the broken remnants towards the Kalahari Desert or into the mountain recesses of Basutoland. The Boers fought this horde in two great battles. In one the laager of wagons stood like a fortress against the onset of advancing spears. The Zulu impis reached the wagon wheels, and, seizing the spokes, swayed the wagons to and fro in a desperate attempt to break the chains that bound them together and force their way through. But the Boers kept up a ceaseless fire, the women and children loading their long guns behind them, and the regiments fell back broken and defeated. In the other battle the Boers on horseback attacked the Zulu army, galloping up to fire and galloping away when the regiments charged. The Zulus could neither reach their enemy nor get away from them. Thousands fell as the fight proceeded, and in a panic this great Zulu tribe, with its cattle and its women, never halted till not only the Vaal but the Limpopo were far behind, and they felt safe from their enemy, where the Zambesi winds through

the heart of the high plateau which forms the interior of Africa. Here was a splendid country of grass and game, and unwarlike natives, greater in extent than Germany and France put together, with no white man nearer than the weak Portuguese upon the coast. In the centre of this magnificent country the Matabele nation took its place, depasturing its cattle on the wide plains under the granite mountains, and raiding the Mashonas to the east, and the Bechuanas to the west and south. The Mashonas indeed became their serfs, to be raided and robbed at will. Early travellers, Livingstone, Chapman, Baines, and others, have described the country and its people, and the strength and ferocity of the Matabele nation impressed them all. We have vivid pictures of Umsilikatse's great place, where an army many thousand strong did warlike homage to their king. They were magnificent warriors, marshalled in regiments each nearly a thousand strong, wearing towering head-dresses of the black body-plumes of the ostrich, capes of ostrich feathers upon their shoulders, bands of otter skin upon their foreheads, tails of white cattle hanging from arms and legs, and short kilts of black and white catskin. On their left arms they carried the long shields of ox-hide, black, white, red, or speckled, according to their regiments; and in their right hand the short heavy stabbing spear, as important a factor in Zulu power as the short stabbing sword was to the Romans.

Even in Umsilikatse's day, the Matabele were a good deal visited by gold seekers and concession hunters, and his son and successor, Lobengula, had given Thomas Baines a grant of mining rights as early as 9th April 1870. Even by that time prospectors had been at work, and had found gold over a

large area ; companies had been organised ; machinery had even been brought to Tati, and the main roads and the lie of a large part of the country fairly well ascertained. But the formidable nature of the Matabele power, the great distances, the difficulty of the road, the tsetse fly, the discovery of diamonds and then of gold at Barberton—all these things kept back the development of the North. But Rhodes knew that the rush was about to begin, and he meant that the British should be first. "We are now," he said to his friend, Sir Hercules Robinson, "at latitude 22° ; and what a trouble it has been." Sir Hercules replied, "Where do you mean to stop ?" "I will stop," returned Rhodes, "where the country has not been claimed." They looked at the map together. Such a definition, they found, took them to Lake Tanganyika. Sir Hercules refused to go forward ; he had not the backing from England. But Rhodes knew that a German agent was trying to get to Lobengula, and that a Dutch expedition was being fitted out. He proposed one of those compromises of his which meant victory. Why not secure the option ? So much Sir Hercules would do. Mr. J. S. Moffat, the Assistant Commissioner in Bechuanaland, was sent to Lobengula and obtained a treaty in which the King promised to sell, alienate, or cede nothing, and to enter into no treaty or correspondence with any foreign power, without the sanction of the High Commissioner. This treaty was signed on 11th February 1888, and by the autumn of the same year, Rhodes's partner and agents, Rudd, Maguire, and Thompson, had obtained the concession of all mining rights in Lobengula's country in exchange for £100 a month, and a large stock of arms and ammunition

With this concession and the recommendation of the High Commissioner to help him, Rhodes went to London to get his charter, his friend Sir Sidney Sheppard, now Administrator of Bechuanaland, keeping affairs straight with Lobengula. Rhodes was opposed by Exeter Hall, organised by his old opponent Mackenzie, and by the Radicals. He was opposed also by Mr. A. E. Maund, a rival concessionaire with a powerful backing, who had nobbled some of Lobengula's indunas. But Rhodes laid his plans too deep and too well. In his usual way he absorbed and conciliated his competitors; he founded his British South Africa Company with a capital of £1,000,000, of which £200,000 was subscribed by De Beers, and by the end of April 1889 he felt strong enough to apply to the Colonial Office for a Royal Charter. Now the Imperial Government had been well informed by the High Commissioner that the rush into Matabeleland was inevitable, and that it was better to have the thing done under the direction of "a gentleman of character and financial standing," who would "secure the cautious development of the country with a proper consideration for the feelings and prejudices of the natives."

Rhodes's project was for the development and government of the country—Bechuanaland, Matabeleland, and Mashonaland—the extension of railways and telegraphs to the Zambesi, the encouragement of colonisation and of British trade, as well as the working of the mineral concessions. The Colonial Office liked the idea, for it saved them trouble. As Lord Knutsford said: "The example of the Imperial East Africa Company shows that such a body may, to some considerable extent, relieve Her Majesty's Government from diplomatic difficulties and heavy

expenditure." Thus the way was smoothed out at home, and all that remained was to occupy the country. This is where Dr. Jameson comes into our story.

Dr. Jameson was a young Scotch surgeon who had gone to Kimberley in 1878, after making his name as a brilliant operator at London University Hospital. He soon made a great reputation in Kimberley for cool and skilful surgery, and as a man he charmed by his kindness, his courage, and a certain bantering wit, which disarmed those whom it transfixed. Jameson was to appearance all gaiety, frolic, and high spirits; but the manner concealed a character of steely temper and an unselfish idealism that cared nothing for self, but dared anything for others. Jameson and Rhodes soon became bosom friends, Rhodes inspiring Jameson with his immense and brooding conceptions, Jameson lighting up Rhodes's humours with his mercurial and infectious laughter.

Now when Rhodes returned to South Africa in 1889, and began to busy himself recruiting his expeditionary force, he heard that things were not going well at Buluwayo. The rivals and enemies of the Charter, British and foreign, working with the chauvinist element among Lobengula's own people, had at last turned the chief's mind against the Rhodes combination. He had executed the indunas who favoured the scheme, and Rhodes's agent, in fear of his life, had fled from Matabeleland and taken refuge in Mafeking. Lobengula now opposed a hostile front to the undertaking, and the whole scheme was in obvious peril. Rhodes, in great trouble, confided in his friend. Jameson, we are told,[1] grasped the situation in an instant. "I will go," he said;

[1] See Seymour Fort's excellent *Life of Dr. Jameson.*

and to Rhodes's question, "When will you start?" he replied, "To-morrow morning." Now it has to be remembered that Jameson had already visited Lobengula. He had gone the year before, making a holiday of it, with Rhodes's agent, Dr. Rutherfoord Harris, who was convoying the tribute to the royal kraal. On that occasion the indunas had refused to allow the wagons to cross the border; and Jameson had ridden in alone and made a conquest of Lobengula. Therefore he was not without experience. But the adventure was none the less dangerous as affairs now stood, and Jameson, in undertaking to act as Rhodes's ambassador to the King, was risking his life as well as sacrificing a rich practice and brilliant surgical career in the Colony. But Jameson was not of those who count the cost. He went to Lobengula, and found that obese potentate suffering from a severe attack of gout. He undertook to cure him, and was as good as his word. Just so had Hamilton, another Scotch surgeon, obtained from a Mogul Emperor the firman that made the settlement of Calcutta possible. Lobengula took Jameson into higher favour than any white man had reached before. He made him an induna in his favourite regiment, and before the assembled army invested his guest in the barbaric insignia of the impi—the ostrich plumes, the shoulder cape, the black and white shield, the assegais. Jameson was in favour; but his position was precarious. The intrigues went on, gaining strength from the fact that the expeditionary force was gathering on the frontier. It became dangerous even for the King to show much favour to Jameson, and he refused to declare his attitude on the question of the road to Mashonaland. The time drew near when the ex-

pedition was to set forth. Jameson went to bid the King good-bye. We have a vivid picture of the incident from Mr. Fort. The door of the royal hut was in two portions, and Jameson had his farewell interview, leaning over the lower half, the King stark naked, somewhat agitated, "an unwieldy mass of dark copper-coloured flesh moving restlessly up and down in the dim uncertain light of the hut."

"Well, King," said Jameson, "as you will not confirm your promise and grant me the road, I shall bring my white impi, and, if necessary, we shall fight."

"I never refused the road to you and your impi," replied Lobengula.

The hint was sufficient. Jameson went straight to Macloutsie, the frontier station, where the expedition was assembled. It consisted of five hundred mounted police, two hundred pioneers, some volunteers and others, amounting in all to about a thousand souls. They were picked men drawn from South Africa and England. There were Imperial officers, farmers, diggers, prospectors, hunters, most of them well accustomed to the open life of the veld. Selous, the great hunter, who had helped also in the negotiations with Lobengula, was the guide. Colonel Pennefather, assisted by Majors Heany and Borrow, was in military command; Major Johnson was in charge of the commissariat; Mr. A. R. Colquhoun accompanied the force as the Administrator of the new territory. There was no time to be lost. It was known that a strong Portuguese force was being organised to enter from the east, and that 1500 Boers had already signed on for a commando that was to enter from the south. The High Commissioner, however, would allow nothing to be done in a hurry. The ship might have a rough passage; it was not

to be launched before it was tested. Lord Methuen inspected it, and found its timbers staunch and tight.

Thus at last, on the 28th June, the expedition started on its great trek of four hundred miles. It was an anxious journey, through bushy and difficult country, with fear of the Boers on the south, and on the north the Matabele impis. The long column, with its train of wagons and its herds of cattle, was vulnerable to attack. A road had to be cut through thick bush and over rough and hilly country. Many rivers had to be forded. On 1st August the Lundi River was reached, and beyond that the country was unknown even to Selous. It was a rugged, broken country of hill and forest, with a chain of mountains barring the horizon. But away in the distance there was one dark gorge. Into that pass Selous pushed forward, and from the crown of a neighbouring hill looked out upon the open downs beyond. Eight days of toil brought the expedition to the gorge. A Matabele party had warned the force to turn back at Tuli; as they toiled through "Providential Pass," Lobengula's messengers gave them a second and more peremptory warning. But they paid no heed, and on the 14th August they encamped at the head of the pass in full view of the high plateau that lay before them. They now marched forward through open country with more security, although the rumour of war gained strength, and on 11th September they hoisted the Union Jack on the site of the present Salisbury. They had turned the flank of Matabeleland, they had secured the road by a chain of garrisoned forts, and now they entrenched themselves in the centre of Mashonaland. Lobengula had kept his word; the traditions of his house, the recent history of South Africa, the fall of

the Zulu power, told him that resistance was useless. But his braves were all for war, so he kept them in hand by a warlike diplomacy, by marches and counter-marches, by menace and threat. But he did not strike ; the inevitable war was to come later.

How it came was briefly thus. The Matabele had been in the habit of regarding the Mashona as their natural prey. They raided them periodically, killing their men and old people, and carrying away their girls and cattle. It was the custom of the country, and Lobengula could not prevent it. When the Mashona entered the service of the settlers they expected protection, and the settlers in mere humanity could not stand by and see them massacred. Yet the Matabele impis took an especial delight in murdering the Mashonas who were in the service of the white men, and they also freely raided the settlers' cattle. The settlers saw their servants murdered before their eyes, and demanded protection. A small force of Rhodesian police drove back the impi. Dr. Jameson demanded from Lobengula 1000 head of cattle as indemnity. In return, Lobengula demanded that the Mashona in and around Victoria —men, women, and children—should be handed over to him for execution. At the same time he recalled one of his regiments which was raiding Barotseland, and prepared for war. Jameson rapidly organised a force, amounting in all to between 800 and 900 men. Rhodes, who had sold 50,000 shares in the Chartered Company to provide funds for the war, went up to Salisbury by the East Coast, and joined the little army. The first battle took place on the Shangani River, on 25th October 1893, where a force of 5000 Matabele warriors was defeated with great slaughter. A second engagement on 1st November, near the

head-waters of the Bembezi River, practically finished the war. The Matabele had depended on their old tactics of surrounding and charging the square—tactics fatal when against a defence armed with rifles and machine guns. The only reverse of the war was the destruction of the small detachment under Captain Allan Wilson, which had pressed too far ahead in its pursuit. Thus Matabeleland, as well as Mashonaland, fell into Rhodes's hands. He had secured not only the road to the North, but the North itself.

CHAPTER IX

RHODES'S POLICY OF UNION

And now, having seen how Rhodes secured the key to the North, and the North itself, for the British Empire, let us retrace our steps a little and examine Rhodes's political policy in the Cape Parliament. We have seen that his aim was to establish a United States of South Africa under the British flag, and his experience in the De Beers Mine had led him to believe that this great amalgamation was not to be accomplished all at once, but by one step on another. He had learnt much from looking down upon the checkered claims; he had seen the value of position—how one block might be used to dominate another block—how control over lines of communication might give a vital advantage—how, above all, the dominating interest was able to dictate the character and terms of the amalgamation; and, looking at the map of Africa, he saw the same checker of claims, the same anarchy of working—English, Dutch, and

Portuguese, Crown Colony and Responsible Government, interior interests and coast interests, a tangle of conflicting forces that had somehow to be reconciled and brought together in a true union.

When Rhodes entered the Cape House in 1881, the Dutch vote, afterwards organised into the Afrikander Bond by the genius of Mr. Hofmeyr, was a growing force. It was the Conservative agricultural party; it had a single aim and knew what it wanted. The conflicting interests of the various British communities weakened and divided the other side, so that although the British members had almost a monopoly of showy political talent, the control of Cape politics fell more and more under the sway of the Dutch element. Now Rhodes had himself the land-holding instinct: he came of farming stock, and, although he did look "too young and damnably like an Englishman," he soon won the confidence of the farmers by his sympathetic understanding of their needs. In his favourite phrase, he could work with them. The stand he made against the jingoism of Warren and Mackenzie, while it antagonised some of the British stalwarts, made the Dutch farmers his friends. When he protested against the Warren policy of excluding Dutchmen from Bechuanaland, he gave the Dutch a definition of the British Empire which they could accept. "I remember, when a youngster, reading in my English history of the supremacy of my country and its annexations, and that there were two cardinal axioms—that the word of the nation, when once pledged, was never broken; and that, when a man accepted the citizenship of the British Empire, there was no distinction between races." Then his customs policy was after the farmer's heart: "The House," he said in 1886, "has

been wandering year by year in the direction of improper Protection. A Bill has been put in to encourage cotton and woollen manufactures; we all know that this will be a total failure. The country is not adapted for such manufactures. The true protection lies in the encouragement of the growth of our grain and wine. . . . The real protection is to stop the drain on the country by its payment for foreign corn, and produce our own." To "turn a barren desert into a fruitful cornfield"—that was his definition of a customs policy. Then he believed in irrigation, and in State assistance for great irrigation works; he advocated an excise that would not bear directly on the wine-grower; and his policy of expansion was popular because it gave the farmers land for their sons.

Rhodes was a believer in real politics. He saw that South Africa was swayed by two important material interests, land and communications. Land meant expansion, railways meant progress—these were the two dynamic forces which he sought to use. He knew that if he could extend the Cape railway system into the Transvaal, the Cape would dominate the Transvaal; he feared that if the Transvaal succeeded in opening communications with Delagoa Bay, the Transvaal might dominate the Cape. And here again he appealed to the farming interest to support his Imperial policy, for he pointed out that the Transvaal was a good market for Cape produce, and that railways to the Transvaal were necessary to convey that produce. But the prevailing Cape view at that time was narrow and parochial; as Rhodes said, "the mist of Table Mountain covered all." The Cape policy was, as to railways, not to build outside their own borders;

and, as to customs, to charge full rates upon through trade and keep the whole. In fact, the Cape was like a robber baron who, holding the door to South Africa, charged an extortionate ransom for all goods that passed through. Now this might be a good enough policy if there was only one door; but Rhodes realised that there were three—the side door of Natal, the back door of Delagoa Bay, as well as the front door of the Cape. He also realised that, if these doors were once opened, not only would the Cape lose most of her interior trade, but the union of South Africa upon the lines he favoured would be made far more difficult. Kruger, as Rhodes discovered, had made a proposal to Sir Gordon Sprigg of Free Trade between the two countries, and of a joint railway policy which would have extended the Kimberley line to Pretoria. Rhodes supported the scheme with all his energy; to him it seemed a heaven-sent opportunity for the real union of South Africa. In May 1886 we find him appealing to the Cape House to take a large view of the subject and embrace the offer. He urged both the sentimental and the commercial view. It would give them trade, it would give them union. "What is staring the House in the face at the present moment is that unless action is taken at once, the Delagoa Bay Railroad will be carried out. That means that if the Delagoa Bay Railway is carried out, we shall not get a continuation of the line from Kimberley to Pretoria. Commercial people will be always inspiring or instilling into the rulers of the Transvaal hostile action against the Cape Colony. In other words, if the Delagoa Bay Railway is carried out, the real union of South Africa will be indefinitely deferred. If that is not done this session, it will be too late; the

interests of the Transvaal will be turned towards Delagoa Bay, and their commerce will go with their interests. From being connected in commerce, union will come, and that is the only way in which it can come.[1] . . . Commerce should come first, and union will follow by having our interests in common." He went on to urge a Customs Union with the Transvaal. As it was, the Transvaal was being forced by mere want of money to impose a tariff on goods from the Colony. "We must do away with the internal duties, and, if we are going to improve the feeling that exists, we must deal with them on the basis of giving them some share of the customs." But Rhodes was defeated—he stood almost alone; the parochial view prevailed. The Transvaal offer was, as Rhodes said, "rudely refused." In the same year came the gold rush to the Transvaal, providing the funds for the railway to Delagoa Bay. In 1888 Rhodes had to deplore the inevitable disaster which comes to communities, as to individuals, who repent when it is too late. "The balance of the history is a hideous and humiliating attempt to obtain connection with the Transvaal after the rejection of the proposals which the Transvaal had themselves submitted." A little later Rhodes made a stupendous effort to redress the balance so lost. With the financial backing of Lord Rothschild, he offered to buy Delagoa Bay outright from the Portuguese Government. Sir Thomas Fuller has told us how that negotiation failed. The Portuguese Government would have accepted the offer; but feared to outrage the pride of their people. Thus Rhodes

[1] Here we have the Chamberlain policy in germ, to be developed later on, as we shall see, to promote the union of the Empire.

was defeated, and events took their evil course. Kruger, to strengthen his Delagoa Bay Railway, first stopped the Cape line at the frontier, and then heaped charges on the Cape trade when the connection was made. The Cape merchants were reduced to unloading their merchandise at the frontier, and conveying it by cart to the gold fields. Then Kruger closed the drifts, and the Colony and the Republic were brought to the verge of war. If Rhodes had been listened to there would have been no such collision—there would have been a practical customs and railway union of the South African States. If that had happened, there would have been no raid, and no war.

On native policy Rhodes again followed a course which conciliated the Dutch vote and made for union. It is true that he set himself dead against the sale of liquor to natives, and thereby risked antagonising the wine farmer; but against that he set a favourable excise policy. But he went some way with the Dutch on the question of the native franchise. He was against the raw native having a vote; if the native became a civilised man, by work and education, then he was to be given the privilege. Rhodes favoured a property and educational franchise; holding that the "blanket Kafir" neither understood nor desired the vote. "Why," he asked, "should we not settle all these grievances that exist between Dutch and English? I offer to the opposite benches the pomegranate; I ask you to clear away all grievances between you and me, and the native question is the greatest. Do not let the real interests of the natives of South Africa be complicated with the question of the franchise. I repeat they do not want it. . . . The liquor ought to be kept from the

natives, and there the missionary sphere ends. The natives on communal tenure must be kept as a subject race." And he showed how the republics could never accept the native policy of the Cape, which must remain a bar to union. "What is the use of talking about a united South Africa if the native question remains undealt with? Does the House think for one moment that the republics of the Transvaal and the Free State would join with the Colony with its native franchise infinitely beyond the native franchise of Natal. It is impossible." This speech was made in the middle of 1887, and Rhodes was, of course, accused of betraying the rights of the native; but long afterwards, when he was in power, he showed that he understood the native's true interests by framing the measure known as the Glen Grey Act, which gives to the native control over his own affairs. I may sum up Rhodes's native policy here, although I have no space to go into it at length. It was to keep them apart from the white man; to encourage them to work; to give them control over their own affairs under the guidance of the magistrate; to give them primogeniture in land; to educate them gradually in work and civilisation. They were, he said, "fellow-tribesmen of the Druids"; they had two thousand years to make up; they must be helped along the road, but they must not be thrust into a position for which they were not yet fitted.

I have, however, left the main lines of Rhodes's policy which I am now engaged in tracing out. We have seen that he sympathised with the Dutch in their land and protection policy, and that he only differed from them when their leaders endeavoured to throw the development of the North, and therefore the balance of power, into the hands of the

Transvaal. Thus in the nine years before 1890 he showed the Dutch that he was their friend, and when in that year Sir Gordon Sprigg was defeated on his railway policy, it was found that Rhodes was the only man who could carry on the Government. In that year Rhodes took office as Prime Minister, and from then on to 1896 he ruled the Cape Colony with increasing power and authority, not obeying the Bond, as previous Prime Ministers had done, but working with it and through it for certain ends which were common to both. Thus, as to the new territory, he made the Bond his allies by offering its members the land for their sons. His policy is set forth in a letter addressed to the secretary of the Cape Town branch on 17th April 1891. In that letter he invites a deputation to inspect and report upon the new country, and asks the Bond for advice on the terms of settlement. He states that he has arranged for the admission of a hundred farmers from the Transvaal; and as opportunity offers he will admit others from the Transvaal and the Free State, but promises that "no undue preference will be given to them over the Cape Colony farmers." And, having made the point clear, he informs them of the threatened invasion of the Chartered Territory by the Transvaal trekkers, leaving it open to the Cape Dutch to deduce that such an invasion would be hostile to their interests as possible settlers.

Again, in a speech he made to the Afrikander Bond at Kimberley on 30th March 1891, he held before them the hope (which the Dutch had never altogether abandoned) of regaining the differential rate on Cape wines in the British market. For that he was negotiating, and by that he hoped to get "a good market in preference to and against those who are

outside the circle of the British Empire and its Colonies." Then he reminded them that their aim was substantially his—"working quietly, year after year, to bring South Africa into one system as to its railways, as to its customs, and as to its trade in the various products of the country." The obstacle to that end was the existence of the independent states, which Sir Bartle Frere had in vain tried to unite with the Cape. And then comes a passage which I must quote, as it put Rhodes's policy as it were in a nutshell:

"Although there may be two different ways of working it out, the object is the same; and I would say to-night that the only time I ever differed with the Afrikander Bond was when I saw that you were relying too much upon a sentimental arrangement (I am speaking now with regard to the northern states) rather than upon a practical basis. At one time you were prepared to let the whole of the northern territories go from you, in the hope that they would at some future time be united with you. Well, I have been through the fire in the work of amalgamating the diamond mines; and one powerful rule to follow is that you must never abandon a position. It is perfectly true that the northern states may accept your sentiment as to a union with South Africa; but you must come to a bargain with every card you have in your hand. That is the secret of the Bechuanaland development, and the development of Zambesia, now going on. I have not one single atom of antagonistic feeling, in so far as the Transvaal or any of the neighbouring states are concerned; but if your ambition or policy is a union of South Africa, then the Cape Colony must keep as many cards as it may possess. That idea

led to the settlement of Bechuanaland, and that idea has led to the possession of districts in the Zambesia region. . . . It is not for us to interfere with the independence of the states that are neighbouring to us; it is for us to obtain customs relations, railway communication, and free trade in products with them, but never to interfere with their independence. But it is for us, when we have the power and the means, to take the balance of the map and say, 'That shall become part of our system.' . . . The mistake that has been made in the past is to think that a union can be made in half an hour, whether rightly or wrongly, for the good of the country. It took me twenty years to amalgamate the diamond mines. The amalgamation was done by detail, step by step, attending to every little matter in connection with the people interested; and so your union must be done by detail, never opposing any single measure that can bring that union closer, giving up even some practical advantage for a proper union, educating your children to the fact that it is your policy, and that you must and will have it, telling it them and teaching it them in your district *Bestuurs* and households, and demanding that they shall never abandon the idea. In connection with this question, I may meet with opposition; but if I do, I shall not abandon it."

And here Rhodes touched upon his Education policy. He proposed, he said, to found a Teaching Residential University in Cape Colony, where young men from the Free State, the Transvaal, Natal, even Mashonaland, would meet and would go back to their own countries "tied to one another by the strongest feelings that can be created, because the period in your life when you indulge in friendships

which are seldom broken is from the age of eighteen to twenty-one. Therefore, if we had a Teaching Residential University, these young men would go forth into all parts of South Africa prepared to make the future of the country, and in their hands this great question of union could safely be left. . . . Nothing will overcome the associations and the aspirations they will form under the shadow of Table Mountain."

Here, then, was Rhodes's policy,—to unite South Africa under the Colonial system, and therefore under the British flag, by making the Cape Colony the dominating factor, and using to this end customs, railways, the new territory, even the native question and education. All these various questions fitted into one another as parts of a great scheme. It was a great conception, entitling Rhodes—if there had been nothing else—to the name of Statesman.

In the working out of this project Rhodes gradually obtained complete ascendancy over the Cape Parliament. We have seen how he treated the Bond; as for the opposition, he incorporated its most formidable elements in his Government, so that in time he became as strong in the Cape Colony as Kruger was in the Transvaal, while he had also the advantage of absolute rule over the North. And Kruger by his hostility to the Cape added to Rhodes's power, for it threw the Cape Dutch more and more into his hands. When Kruger finally closed the drifts against the Cape trade, Rhodes had almost the entire Colony, Dutch as well as English, at his back. It is true that there always was a Dutch party in the Cape devoted to the purely racial ideal and willing to make any sacrifice to that end. This party favoured Krugerism, and, being strong in Stellenbosch,

it checkmated Rhodes's scheme of a Teaching University to bring together the two races. Rhodes offered a magnificent site on the slopes of Table Mountain, and promised the support of his great fortune if only the colleges would unite in his scheme. But the Stellenbosch Theological Seminary, the stronghold of Dutch nationalism, stubbornly refused, and in this part of his scheme Rhodes had to acknowledge himself beaten.

Whether this spirit of Dutch nationalism would have beaten him on the greater project if the Raid had not cut across his plans we shall never know, and it is not profitable to guess.

CHAPTER X

THE JAMESON RAID

Those who study South African history aright see in the Raid only an episode—picturesque and important, but still only an episode in the long struggle between the Imperial and the Republican systems. Rhodes led on the one side, and Kruger on the other. The object of Kruger, as we have seen, was to extend and strengthen the republican system, to make it independent of the Colonies and to force the Colonies into ultimate union upon republican terms. The object of Rhodes was to extend the Colonial system, to make the Cape predominant, and by predominance in customs and railways, as well as by the influence of the increasing British population in the Transvaal, to secure union on Colonial terms. The fight for Bechuanaland, Mashonaland, Swaziland, Zululand, Amatongaland, are all incidents in the same great

contest. Kruger raided freely. He had been raiding all his life. He raided Bechuanaland, he raided Swaziland, he raided Mashonaland. The raid was one of the chief weapons in his armoury. Sometimes it succeeded, and sometimes it failed. And another weapon on which he relied was the blood relationship of the Dutch Cape Colonists. Here Rhodes had a difficult problem to deal with, for it was these Dutch Colonists that he chiefly relied upon in the Cape Parliament. But he skilfully used the hostile policy of Kruger to keep the Dutch on the Colonial side. Thus in 1894, speaking on the high duties imposed by the republic on Colonial products, he said : " Our wagons, our fruit, wine, grain, butter, even our cattle, are being heavily taxed. We have been promised consideration, but the Transvaal has done nothing." And then he skilfully linked the grievance of the Outlanders with this agricultural grievance : " The President is in favour of a system which refuses the franchise to seven-tenths of the population, and rejects commercial relations with a friendly and neighbouring State, which had come forward to help him in time of need. Meanwhile," and here comes the third link in the chain, " we may be thankful that our route to the Zambesi and beyond is open and free, and that the far north will some day be a portion of the Cape Colony. We must, then, be patient and not lose our tempers. Our only course is to maintain a statesmanlike and dignified position."

There were by this time at least forty thousand Outlanders, mostly British subjects, in the Transvaal, and although they were a large majority of the population, and paid nearly the entire amount of the state revenues, they were denied any voice in the government of the country. This in itself was a

situation scarcely tolerable to Englishmen; but it might have been borne with fair treatment and just administration. But there was neither justice nor fairness. The chief public services were in the hands of monopolists; justice was overruled by the Volksraad, so that even a Dutch Chief Justice was fain to resign by way of protest; the Outlanders were forced to fight in native wars in which they had no concern; and a foreign Civil Service composed of Hollanders, and under the domination of Leyds, worked against all Outlander interests. Kruger would yield nothing; as far back as 1892 he had said to a representative deputation: "Go back and tell your people, I shall never give them anything, and now let the storm burst!" The High Commissioner, the British Government, the Cape Government, protested in vain.

Thus the storm-cloud grew until it covered the whole land. By 1895 the Cape Colony, Dutch and English, was ready to fight the Transvaal on the drifts question. The Imperial Government was also behind Rhodes. On the 1st November of that year the two Governments, the Imperial Government and the Cape, had agreed to send an expedition into the Transvaal at joint expense. Kruger was informed of this decision, and on 5th November he showed his cleverness as a politician by opening the drifts as a temporary measure, while maintaining his iron grip on the Outlanders. This move was calculated to divide the forces against him; the Cape Dutch were pacified by the opening of the drifts, and the issue was narrowed to a question of Dutch *versus* British. Thus Rhodes, in the midst of his preparations, with his Chartered Police upon the Transvaal border and the Reformers arming in Johannesburg, was deprived of the cause which gave him the sympathy

of the Dutch and the assistance of the British Government.

But the Outlander grievance remained—a wrong, degrading and intolerable. It was resolved between the Reformers in Johannesburg, Jameson on the border, and Rhodes at Cape Town, that in the last resort the Rhodesian Police should be used in support of the Reform movement. The general scheme had fair possibilities of success—to seize Johannesburg by a concerted movement, to hold the Boers at bay, and thus to force the Imperial Government to intervene and make a settlement. That settlement was to guarantee the independence of the Boers in return for redress of grievances, a customs union, equalisation of railway rates, and a common court of appeal —the elements of a future federation ; [1] but whether these were to form part of the settlement, or were to be the political result of the extension of the franchise in the Transvaal, is not clear. And it is doubtful if Rhodes's intention was to send in the police at all. It was, no doubt, in his mind that on two occasions, when either force had been shown or the threat of force had been used, Kruger had given way. The Warren Expedition in Bechuanaland was one ; the recent threat of an expedition to open the drifts another. Thus Rhodes may have thought that the show of force would be sufficient. On both sides, it was part of the game well understood. Kruger had made several raids and threatened several more. The use of the Rhodesian Police upon the border as a factor of persuasion was then an almost normal incident in South African politics.

But to Jameson it was something more. He had recently conducted an amazingly swift and successful

[1] See Michell, vol. ii. p. 144.

campaign against Lobengula. He had an admirable little force, and it is said that his imagination was fired by the story of Garibaldi and the Thousand. He believed that the scheme of a rapid invasion, and the seizure of the Rand and possibly Pretoria, was the best way out of a situation that had become intolerable.

Thus there may have been two minds at cross-purposes, and it is certain also that Jameson was at cross purposes with the Reformers. They were not ready; they had contrived to smuggle in only two thousand rifles, five guns, and twenty thousand rounds of ammunition; they were divided on the subject of the flag to be raised, and found the date of the proposed rising in Pretoria coincided with the New Year's *Nacht-Maal*, the Communion Services, when the Boers flocked into town from the country districts. On the other hand, Jameson was ready; his five hundred troopers were fretting at Pitsani on the border; his relays of horses and provisions along the route of march awaited him; he may well have felt that if the opportunity went, no such chance would ever occur again. At the last moment the Reformers tried to stop him; but Jameson rode in nevertheless. He was without orders from Rhodes, and was acting against the advice of his fellow-conspirators. He thought he could manage the affair by himself. The sight of his troopers in Johannesburg, he no doubt believed, would unite all the waverers, and inspire the whole community to a general rising. But his proverbial luck for once went against him. Everything went wrong, as if inspired by a malicious fate. The troopers bungled over the cutting of the wires; many of the relay horses were found to be crocks. Weary, and deceived by firing

when Johannesburg was only twenty miles distant, they took the wrong turning, and went some way towards Krugersdorp. Even so, they covered one hundred and ninety miles in eighty-six hours, and were within an ace of getting into Johannesburg.

But the failure was no less disastrous. It destroyed Rhodes's work, his party, his position, at a blow. On 2nd January 1896, Jameson surrendered at Doornkop; on the evening of the same day Rhodes tendered his resignation to the High Commissioner at Cape Town. His credit with the Imperial Government was destroyed; his alliance with the Bond was at an end; the most powerful part of the Dutch party in Cape Colony, unable to withstand the tide of racial feeling let loose by the Raid, took the side of Kruger and the Republic. Rhodes's party, as far as he had a party left, was the British party, which condemned him to a minority: and as Rhodes fell Kruger rose in strength; the President had all the prestige of victory, and the Reform Party were completely in his power. He triumphed; but he failed, for his use of the triumph made inevitable the great war that swept away the republican system in South Africa.

CHAPTER XI

THE MATABELE REBELLION

When Jameson was riding into the Transvaal, Rhodes was at Groote Schuur, consumed with anxiety. Groote Schuur, the "Great Barn" of the Dutch governors, is, as we know it now, a noble house in the Dutch colonial style, upon the lower slopes of

Table Mountain, upon a corner of the great estate which stretches upwards to the crags and precipices of the rock itself and along the mountain side for some seven miles to Constantia Nek. Here Rhodes made a beautiful home, not so much for himself or even his friends, but for all the world. He laid it out in roads, and parks, and gardens, through which, from end to end, the people whom he loved had freedom to wander. Here the news came to him, and we know from trustworthy witnesses that it struck him an almost mortal blow. He had no sleep for five nights,[1] Jourdan tells us, and for several days he was seen by none, but wandered about in the tempest of his thoughts among the woods and boulders of the mountain side. When Jourdan came with the messages which showered upon them, "he would select a telegram, look at it for a second, then replace it with the others, and resume his pacing up and down in an absent-minded manner." One remark he made which has the ring of the man's heart in it: "Now that I am down, I shall see who are my real friends." His rushings to and fro at this time seem part instinctive as of a creature in pain. First he went to Kimberley, which he loved; a week there, and he made for England: little comfort there in the deafening yap and clatter of censorious tongues. Four days in England, and he set out by the East Coast for Rhodesia, where at last he found work to occupy and distract his mind. The Matabele, hearing of the defeat of Jameson and his troopers, had risen in rebellion, and begun operations with a massacre of the white settlers.

[1] *Cf.* Jourdan, p. 28. "I do not think he slept a wink for five nights. Tony, his personal servant, told me that 'The Baas walks up and down his bedroom, which is locked, at all times of the night.'"

It was a formidable rising. The Matabele, wiser from recent experience, fought in guerilla fashion, taking cover in the bush and granite caves of the Matoppos, and conducting an active and dangerous, if desultory warfare. At this time the affairs of the Company were at a low ebb, and Rhodesia itself was in a bad way, for, besides its losses by the rising, which paralysed mining and agriculture, its cattle had been swept clean by the rinderpest. Rhodes saw that as the war was going it might last long enough to bring his Colony to ruin. He had no official standing, the Imperial Government having compelled him to resign his position as Managing Director of the Chartered Company. But without other authority than the man himself, he assumed control of the situation, and opened peace negotiations with the rebels.

And here Rhodes showed in a supreme degree his genius for dealing with men. General Carrington's little army lay within easy reach of the hills in which the enemy were hidden; but Rhodes moved his own camp to the very skirts of the hills, and two miles from the army. This he did "in order to win their confidence," and in that exposed and perilous position he lay for six weeks coaxing first one chief and then another, as it were, to feed from his hand. By slow degrees he won their complete confidence. "He sat," says Jourdan, "day after day throughout the heat of the day talking to the chiefs and cracking jokes with them, until we were tired to death of the sight of them. . . . He chaffed and teased the chiefs, and sometimes one fancied he was one of them by the way he adapted himself to their customs and methods of expression. He delighted in chaffing them. His face would beam all over when he thought he had

the best of an argument and had them in a corner." By such means a great peace *indaba* or council was arranged, and Rhodes, unarmed and without escort, accompanied only by three friends, rode into the hills and faced the line of armed warriors. For three or four hours they discussed their grievances and the terms of peace, and the natives, we are told, listened with downcast eyes when Rhodes sternly rebuked them for their massacre of women and children.

Then, as if indifferently, he said, "Is there to be peace or war?" The leading chiefs threw their spears at his feet.

The three with Rhodes were Colenbrander, Hans Sauer, and Captain Stent. Captain Stent tells us that as they rode back to camp, Rhodes turned to Dr. Sauer and said: "It is such scenes as this that make life worth living."

We may believe that this great work was medicine to his mind, and he found further comfort in riding through the great new country from town to town, and from farm to farm, hearing and redressing grievances, and setting settlers upon their legs again by the bounty of his private purse.

CHAPTER XII

THE WAR

By January 1897 he was in England once more, as he said, "to face the music." He was in good heart: "When I arrived in London," he said, "and saw the 'busmen and cabbies and other working men touch their hats to me in a friendly way, I knew I

was all right and that the man in the street had forgiven me." Rhodes loved the working men. He knew their contact with hard realities gave them a sense which the upper classes often lack—a sense to cut down to the rough justice of the business. He had also a deep regard for the opinion of good women. One, the wife of an old friend whom he met after the Raid in a London house, he drew aside, and said to her quite simply that the blow of Fate had done him good; it had made him more humble, less arbitrary.

To the Select Committee he made a fair and frank statement of his case. What he had done he did to gain civic rights for "the majority of the population, possessing more than half the land, nine-tenths of the wealth, and paying nineteen-twentieths of the taxes in the country," who were denied any share in the administration. There is no need to go further into the case; it had yet to be decided; it was Kruger that was on his trial, and when doom was pronounced it was Kruger that fell.

In the meantime, the Raid had produced what might be called a precipitation in Cape politics. Parties had divided anew upon nearly racial lines, and stood, the Progressives for the Empire and the South African party for the Republics. Rhodes's old friends and colleagues were now opponents and usually enemies—Hofmeyr, Sauer, Merriman, Schreiner; all, somewhat against their will but by the force of circumstances, were driven into the service of Kruger. None of them, it may be believed, approved of Kruger's policy. Merriman certainly had encouraged the rebellion of the Outlanders before the Raid.

It will help us to understand some of these ani-

mosities, if I go back for a moment to the Cabinet split of 1893, an affair which I had omitted owing to the narrow compass of this little book. Three members of Rhodes's Cabinet, Merriman, Sauer, and Sir James Innes, combined against their colleague, Sir James Sivewright, owing to his treatment of a railway refreshment contract. The charges somewhat resembled those made as to the recent Marconi contract—that Sivewright had given to a personal friend, and without tender, what amounted to "a virtual monopoly for twenty years." Rhodes was in England when the charges were made, and, although he tried his best to settle matters amicably, he refused to side with the majority by prejudging the case. The upshot was that he formed a new Ministry which excluded all four, and from that time on Merriman and Sauer were his enemies. Their animosity, which, like all their motives, was personal in its origin, was, however, impotent until the Raid gave it a pretext and a weapon. Mr. Schreiner was a later colleague, who fell away from his chief and friend after the Raid. He was honest, but weak, sentimental, and self-deceiving, and became the tool of less scrupulous men. Behind, there was Hofmeyr, always obedient in the last resort to the racial impetus, which drove him forward, and giving an unwilling allegiance to the power behind Setebos, Kruger, the true antagonist of Rhodes.

Rhodes held his own well against great odds. He had still the affection, open or secret, of a large number of the Dutch Cape Colonists, although the Bond was officially against him. He stood for a United South Africa under the British flag against the corrupt republicanism of the Transvaal; and he gained power from the persistent refusal of Kruger to grant

any concession, the scandalous corruption of his government, and its continued hostility to the interests of the Cape Colony. Rhodes was able to point out that he had developed the North on lines that helped the trade and agriculture of the Cape: "There are 10,000 people taking the whole of their wheat from Malmesbury, Piquetberg, and Caledon, because we have given them this protection on the railways, namely, a halfpenny per ton per mile for 600 miles, instead of the ordinary rate paid on the flour purchased in Australia." In the Transvaal, on the other hand, "all they thought of was of excluding us. This state tries to isolate itself and exclude all South Africa." The Transvaal Government was "attempting the impossible." It had even driven out its Chief Justice, a Dutch colonial, because he could not stand the depravity of the administration. Such arguments were well designed to gain the support of the Dutch Colonial farmer, and they naturally led up to the great argument of the advantages of union: "We human atoms may divide this country, but nature does not, and the Almighty does not; and whether you are residents here, or in Durban, Johannesburg, or the newly formed state of Rhodesia, the interests are the same, connected in family and thought and domestic relations, and any one who tries to separate them in thought, dealing, and connection is attempting an impossibility."

But things had gone too far for argument, however reasonable and self-evident in its truth. There is an element in life of which Rhodes perhaps never quite appreciated the full strength, and that is racialism. The call of the blood is stronger than reason, and silences the voice even of interest. War was now

inevitable, although almost to the last moment Rhodes believed that Kruger would give way, as he had given way before force in Bechuanaland, in Matabeleland. Rhodes was wrong: affairs had reached that tragic pitch when it becomes impossible for anyone to give way.

When war was at last seen to be certain, Rhodes went to Kimberley, the place he loved best, and the place to him of most danger. He threw his whole energy into the defence of the town; saw to the reserves of coal and food in the mines; gave his gardeners orders to plant large quantities of vegetables, organised a weekly distribution of fruit among the troops, built a fort where he thought the line of fortifications was weak on the Kenilworth side, organised its garrison, and raised and provided horses for a corps of mounted men. In the course of these activities, it was almost inevitable that there should be friction with the commandant of the garrison, Colonel Kekewich, a good soldier, with his own ideas of what was to be done and whose orders were to be obeyed. As for Rhodes he had grown accustomed to authority, and had never known discipline, while the progress of the disease which was to kill him made him arbitrary and irritable in his manner. It is none the less true that Rhodes was the life and soul of the civilian side of the defence, and that such measures as he took were considerate, humane, practical. Here, as in Rhodesia, he showed himself personally brave. He rode everywhere on his pony, the white flannel trousers which he always wore on horseback making him a conspicuous mark for Boer riflemen.

And when the siege was raised, Rhodes lost no time in pointing the moral of the war. On 23rd February

1900, a few days after the siege was raised, he made a speech at the annual meeting of De Beers. "All contention will be over," he said, "with the recognition of equal rights for every civilised man south of the Zambesi. That principle, for which we have been so long struggling, is the crux of the present struggle, and my belief is that, when the war is over, a large number of the Dutch in this country will throw in their lot with us on this basis, that neither race shall claim any right of preference over the other. We have no feeling against them. We have lived with them, shot with them, visited with them, and we find, owing I suppose to the race affinity, that there is not much difference between us."

CHAPTER XIII

HOW RHODES DIED AND WAS BURIED

Thus, indeed, union was to come; but Rhodes was not to see it. The fatal heart disease now made rapid progress. He was still a young man; he had led a clean, healthy, virtuous, open-air life; in all his habits he was temperate, even frugal; but he had never spared himself, never taken care of himself; he had never married, and there was no woman's love to watch over him. His last days were indeed tormented, and his disease aggravated, by cruel persecution by a woman of the baleful and desolating order. The true story of this miserable affair is told in Mr. Jourdan's work, which, as I gather

from other sources, is to be relied upon in every detail. Poor Rhodes, nearing his end and defenceless by reason of his chivalry, was hunted and then slandered. His good name was sullied without a shadow of justification, and the climax came with the forging of Rhodes's name to a series of bills which were taken up in Cape Town and made a trial for forgery necessary. Rhodes was then in England; but insisted on returning to give his evidence. The journey was too much for his failing strength; he gave his evidence at the preparatory examination, but did not live to see his name completely cleared by the trial. He retired to die in the little seaside village of Muizenburg. There in a little cottage, with the sound of the league-long rollers of the Indian Ocean in his ears, with its spume in his nostrils, he faced at last an enemy too strong for him.

"It was most heartrending," says Jourdan, "to see him sit on the edge of his bed with one limb resting on the floor and the other akimbo in front of him on the bed, at one moment gasping for breath, and at another with his head sunk so low that his chin almost touched his chest." He was surrounded by his friends, and that to Rhodes was the greatest of comforts. Sir Edmund Stevenson, Dr. Jameson, Dr. Smartt, both as friends and doctors did for him what could be done. Sir Charles Metcalfe, his old Oxford friend, and his right-hand man in Rhodesia, and a few other intimates, were constantly with him. To the end he was brave, cheerful, and unselfish, and even in death, as Jourdan says, and as the death-mask testifies, "he looked determined, dignified, and masterful."

"On the afternoon of Wednesday, the 26th March,"[1] says Sir Lewis Michell, "I sat for a while by his bedside, while Dr. Jameson, worn out by persistent watching day and night, took a short rest. The patient was restless and uneasy. Once he murmured, 'So little done, so much to do,' and then after a long pause I heard him singing softly to himself, maybe a few bars of an air he had once sung at his mother's knee. Then, in a clear voice, he called for Jameson."

The end came within an hour.

Rhodes was buried as he wished, in a grave cut in the granite on a summit of the Matoppos—"The World's View" he had called it. Beneath and around his grave, stretches the great land he had given to the Empire.

CHAPTER XIV

RHODES—THE MAN AND HIS WORK

In this brief sketch, I have tried to give the main outline of Rhodes's life and work, and wherever possible I have let his own words testify. This method I hope has made clear the large conception of duty that ruled his life, as well as the ruling principles of his statesmanship. But one aspect of this statesmanship I have hitherto neglected,—his interest in the affairs of England and the British Empire as a whole. He was a believer in what the Germans call "real politik"—he believed, that is to say, that politics were ruled and determined by the

[1] 1902.

interests of mankind, as well as by the facts of the physical world. Thus he believed that the union of the British Empire must be laid on a foundation of common interests. He was a preferentialist, or, as we now say, a Tariff Reformer, long before Chamberlain. It is worth remembering that the great friend of his early days in Cape politics was Jan Hofmeyr. Hofmeyr was a man of the wine-farming South-West, and, in common with all his people, looked upon the Cobden Treaty with France as the most momentous and disastrous fact in Imperial politics. The Cape wine trade with England had been built up on a preference of six shillings a gallon, and when that preference was abolished in 1860, this flourishing trade had been completely destroyed. It had brought many farmers to ruin; it had ruined the wine industry. More than any other single act of policy, it had made the Cape Dutchman distrust and dislike England. Now it is remarkable that in the Colonial Conference of 1887 Hofmeyr, as the Cape representative, proposed an Imperial tariff to be imposed by England and all the Dominions on foreign goods, and the proceeds to be used for the navy. I feel certain, although there is no proof, that Rhodes gave this Imperial turn to Hofmeyr's desire to get the wine preference back again. In 1891, in a speech made to the wine farmers of the Paarl, Rhodes recounts a conversation he had with Lord Salisbury. He had said to the Prime Minister: "If you wish to retain the sentiment of the Colonies, you must consider day by day how you can give the people some commercial advantage, and thus show them that the tie with England is one that is of practical advantage to themselves." He had then told Lord Salisbury of the destruction of the Cape wine trade,

and he added: "When I discussed this with Lord Salisbury, I adopted the suggestions I had had from Mr. Hofmeyr about a differential rate, and said the greatest tie England could make with the Cape Colony was to return to the system of 1858."

But Rhodes did not propose a one-sided arrangement. On the contrary, he regarded the Colonies as the great future markets for British manufactures that by statesmanship might be kept open when other markets were closed by hostile tariffs. At the second annual meeting of the Chartered Company he had much to say on this question:

"Cobden had his idea of Free Trade for all the world, but that idea has not been realised. The whole world can see that we can make the best goods in this country, and the countries of the world therefore establish against us, not protective tariffs, but prohibitive tariffs. . . . It seemed to be forgotten in talking about these islands that there are thirty-six millions of people, and that the islands only produce sufficient to support six millions, the other thirty millions being entirely dependent on the trade of the world. . . . I know full well if President Harrison's policy is continued by the Yankees they will absorb Canada, make reciprocal arrangements with South America, and declare the New World to be self-supporting. . . . I want to show the masses that the question of the day for them is the Tariff question, and this country is the last country that should abstain from dealing with it."

And at the general meeting of 1895 he explained how he had applied this doctrine in Rhodesia. He pointed out that the Colonies when they were given

self-government put on protective tariffs, and thus built up what he called "bastard industries." They were bastard industries because a young country, with coal and iron undeveloped, and with a sparse population, could make no real profit out of them; they were expensive and unremunerative. "The only chance for a Colony," he said, "is to stop these ideas before they are created, and, taking this new country of ours, I thought it would be a wise thing to put in the Constitution that the tariff (on British goods) should not exceed the present Cape tariff, which is a revenue and not a protective tariff." This clause gave security that, if ever the Rhodesian tariff was heightened, British goods would be given a preference. Moreover, "this clause, being in our own charter, would have governed the rest of Africa, and therefore you would have had Africa preserved to British goods as one of your markets." This proposal, he went on to say, had been refused by the British Government, and he asked the shareholders to use all their political influence to have it reinserted.

"All these big questions, remember, come from little things. If you carry that clause in the Constitution of Matabeleland, you do not know how it will spread, the basis being that your goods shall not be shut out from the markets of the world. That clause will extend from Matabeleland to Mashonaland, throughout Africa, and then, perhaps, Australia and Canada may consider the question. You will be retaining the market for your goods. You have been actually offered this, but have refused it, because you did not understand it."

Here, then, was Rhodes's Empire policy—a policy of closer union on the basis of preferential trade

arrangements—a policy which was later to be adopted by our greatest Colonial Minister and by the Unionist Party—a policy which, as Rhodes prophesied, has been adopted by Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa.

In politics Rhodes used to call himself a Liberal, no doubt because he believed in democracy and popular government. He believed also in a system of federalism for the Empire, and was alarmed to find in Gladstone's Home Rule Bill of 1886 that no provision was made for Irish representation in Parliament. To secure that end he subscribed £10,000 to the funds of the Irish Nationalists. The object of the gift, like most of Rhodes's actions, has been misrepresented: it is made quite clear by the letter to Parnell which accompanied it. "Side by side," he wrote, "with the tendency to decentralisation in local affairs, there is growing up a feeling for the necessity of greater union in Imperial matters. The primary tie which binds our Empire together is the one of self-defence. The Colonies are already commencing to co-operate with and contribute to the Mother Country for this purpose; but if they are to contribute permanently and beneficially, they will have to be represented in the Imperial Parliament, where the disposition of their contributions must be decided upon." For the same purpose he sent in 1891 a cheque for £5000 to the Liberal Party funds, with another condition—that the money should be given to a charity if it became Liberal policy to clear out of Egypt. "It would be an awful thing," he said in his postscript, "to give my money to breaking up the Empire."

Rhodes's Education policy was directed to the same end—first to the union of South Africa, and, when

racial bigotry refused the splendid gift, to the union of the Empire, by the instrumentality of Oxford. That is the meaning of his will; but not the entire meaning, for American students are included in the scheme, one proof out of several that Rhodes dreamed of the federation of the Anglo-Saxon race.

So much for the man's work: I have left myself but a page or two in which to speak of the man himself. His character has been much maligned and much misunderstood. In business he was scrupulously honourable: to do anything crooked or underhand was not in his character. On this point not only his friends but his rivals in business are unanimous. Even Cohen, who never errs on the side of reticence, never said a word against the honour of Rhodes. As to the Raid, the massing of troops on the Transvaal border has always seemed to me an act of sound statesmanship fully justified by the circumstances. It is as to the crossing of the border that there may be two opinions, and there Rhodes had no hand. But as he did not shirk responsibility, the defence may rest upon this, that it was a blow, ill-aimed and ill-judged perhaps, but a blow for freedom.

While honourable, then, in business and public life, Rhodes was also unselfish. There was no base taint of personality. His thought was never for himself, but for the Commonwealth. And so in private life all his thoughts were for his friends, and for the poor and the oppressed. His benefactions were so enormous that, although his income amounted to something like a quarter of a million a year, his account was nearly always overdrawn at the bank. Few men and no women in distress ever appealed to

him in vain. And his actions were not the gross and thoughtless charities of the man with too much money for his needs, for his telegraph and railway schemes to link the North with the South of Africa were financed so largely from his private purse that he was always in need. No, he valued money for what it could do, and he spent for the joy of helping. He spent carefully and thoughtfully, his kind acts being all marked by the same tact, care, and tenderness. Even when he was a poor digger he would take infinite pains, and spend more than he could afford, in helping some lame dog over the stile. Sometimes even the lame dog did not know who helped him over.

He was a man who delighted in the society of friends and in the community of ideas. He loved argument and discourse, and his habit of thought was to brood over some clear and simple principle, following it out into its practical ramifications. When he spoke in public it was as if he thought aloud, and even his private conversation was often a soliloquy.

He never spoke evil of any man or any woman; but had an art to see the best in them. Once in his hearing a clever young man, now risen to eminence, said he had praised Lord Cromer in the press, "because it paid." "No," said Rhodes, "you praised him because it was right."

He kept open house to all men and to the whole population of South Africa. When he lived, he let people wander at will over his estates, and even through his house; when he died, house and estates became the property of South Africa.

He thought much of the future, and this is perhaps the chief distinction between great men and small

—that small men are occupied by the present, and great men occupy themselves with what is to come. There is upon this point a passage of such beauty in one of his speeches about Rhodesia that I cannot refrain from quoting it.

"I remember," he said, "in the impetuosity of my youth I was talking to a man advanced in years, who was planting—what do you think? He was planting oak trees, and I said to him, very gently, that the planting of oak trees by a man advanced in years seemed to me rather imaginative. He seized the point at once, and said to me, 'You feel that I shall never enjoy the shade?' I said, 'Yes,' and he replied, 'I had the imagination, and I know what that shade will be, and at any rate no one will ever alter these lines. I have laid my trees on certain lines; I know that I cannot expect more than to see them beyond a shrub, but with me rests the conception, and the shade, and the glory.'"

Rhodes never said that every man had his price; but he said there was no man with whom he could not deal. That was his method of doing things—to deal with other men, to show them what their interests were, and, in his favourite phrase, "to have it out with them." His whole method was an appeal to reason. With every man he crossed, whether it was Kruger or Lobengula or Barnato, he always "had it out with him."

Rhodes believed in religious education, and in religion as an influence; but as for himself he did not know. As he said to the Jesuit Father Barthélemy, all he knew was that he must do his best in this world according to his lights, and do no harm intentionally to anyone. And he added: "Yes, in fact, if I was to go before the Almighty

to-morrow, and He was to tell me that He thought I had acted very badly at times, and had wronged some people wittingly, say Kruger, for instance, well—I should be prepared to have it out with Him."

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Printed by BALLANTYNE, HANSON & Co.
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